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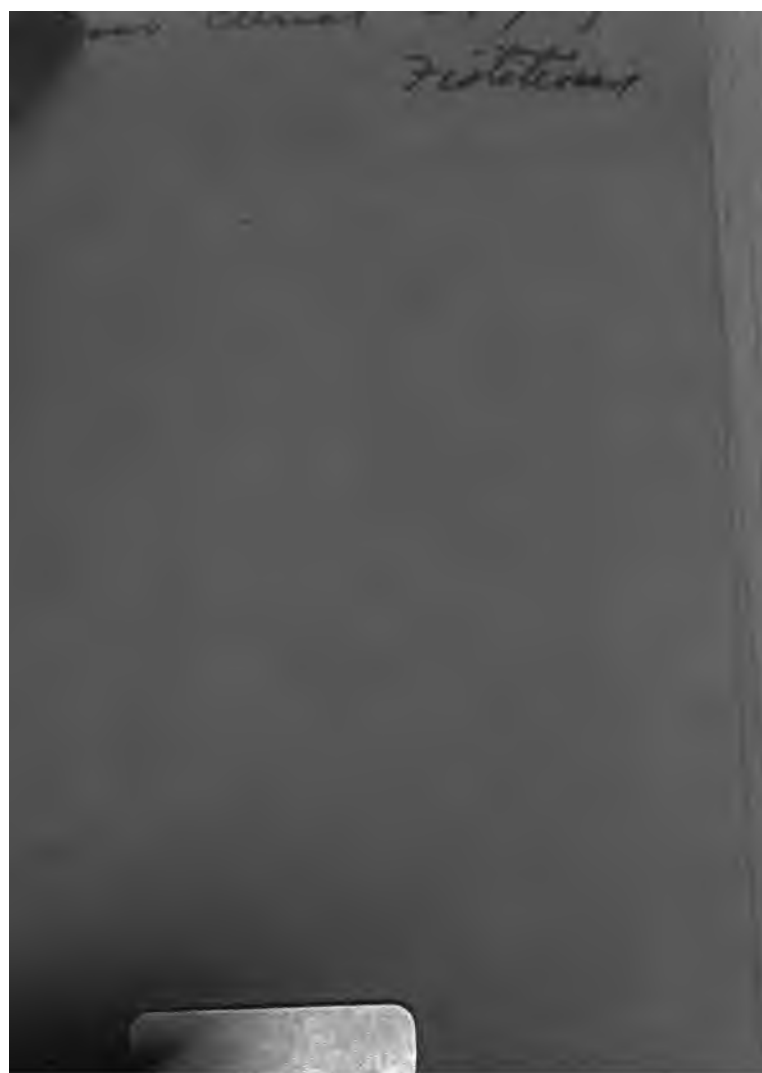
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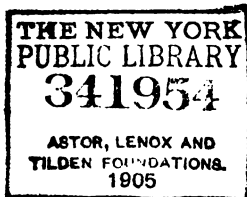
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
VOLUME I.	5
MELKER'S LETTER TO THE SANHEDRIN.	
VOLUME II.	25
GAMALIEL'S REPORT TO THE SANHEDRIN.	
VOLUME III.	49
REPORT OF CAIAPHAS TO THE SANHEDRIN CONCERN- ING THE EXECUTION OF JESUS.	
VOLUME IV.	85
PILATE'S REPORT TO TIBERIAS CAESAR.	
VOLUME V.	109
HEROD'S TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.	



PREFACE.

These works come from the same source and in the same manner as do the great and celebrated writings of the Anti-Nicene Fathers. They, however, are divine, these are human. While these bits of history are small, the reader must remember that the experience of men in those days gave them many ideas which their limited vocabulary hindered them from expressing, hence their writings were limited. As, for example, Josephus wrote 72 volumes, but they only make about 600 pages of printed matter, and Philo wrote 112 volumes, but they only make about 700 or 800 pages of printed matter. Although this is human history, it confirms the divine.

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VOLUME I.


MELKER'S LETTER TO THE SANHEDRIN.

He was priest of the Synagogue at Bethlehem, when Jesus was born, and describes the phenomena that occurred there that night, in his own words. This was translated from the Talmuds.

JONATHAN, son of Heziel, investigates the shepherds and others at Bethlehem in regard to the strange circumstances reported to have occurred there, and reports to this court:

Jonathan to the Masters of Israel, servants of the true God: In obedience to your order, I met with two men, who said they were shepherds, and were watching their flocks near Bethlehem. They told me that while attending to their sheep, the night being cold and chilly, some of them had made fires to warm themselves, and some of them had lain down and were asleep; that they were awakened by those that were keeping watch with the question, "What does all this mean? Behold, how light it is!" that when they were aroused it was as light as day. But they knew, it was not daylight, for it was only the third watch. All at once the air seemed to

be filled with human voices, saying, "Glory! Glory! Glory to the most High God!" and, "Happy art thou, Bethlehem, for God hath fulfilled his promise to the fathers; for in thy chambers is born the King that shall rule in righteousness." Their shoutings would rise up in the heavens, and would then sink down in mellow strains, and roll along at the foot of the mountains, and die away in the most soft and musical manner they had ever heard; then it would begin again high up in the heavens, in the very vaults of the sky, and descend in sweet and melodious strains, so that they could not refrain from shouting and weeping at the same time. The light would seem to burst forth high up in the heavens, and then descend in softer rays and light up the hills and valleys, making everything more visible than the light of the sun, though it was not so brilliant, but more clear, like the brightest moon. I asked them how they felt—if they were not afraid; they said at first they were; but after awhile it seemed to calm their spirits, and so fill their hearts with love and tranquility that they felt more like giving thanks than anything else. They said it was around the whole city, and some of the people were almost



scared to death. Some said the world was on fire; some said the gods were coming down to destroy them; others said a star had fallen; until Melker, the priest, came out shouting and clapping his hands, seeming to be frantic with joy. The people all came crowding around him, and he told them that it was the sign that God was coming to fulfill his promise made to their father Abraham. He told us that fourteen hundred years before God had appeared to Abraham, and told him to put all Israel under bonds—sacred bonds of obedience; and if they would be faithful, he would give them a Savior to redeem them from sin, and that he would give them eternal life, and that they should hunger no more; that the time of their suffering should cease forever; and that the sign of his coming would be that light would shine from on high, and the angels would announce his coming, and their voices should be heard in the city, and the people should rejoice; and a virgin that was pure should travail in pain and bring forth her first born, and he should rule all flesh by sanctifying it and making it obedient. After Melker had addressed the people in a loud voice, he and all the old Jews went into the synagogue

and remained there praising God and giving thanks.

I went to see Melker, who related to me much the same as the shepherds had reported. He told me that he had lived in India, and that his father had been priest at Antioch; that he had studied the sacred scrolls of God all his life, and that he knew that the time had come from signs given, for God to visit and save the Jews from Roman oppression and from their sins, and as evidence he showed me many quotations on the tripod respecting the matter.

He said that next day three strangers from a great distance called on him, and they went in search of this young child; and they found him and his mother in the mouth of the cave where there was a shed projecting out for the sheltering of sheep; that his mother was married to a man named Joseph, and she related to them the history of her child, saying, that an angel had visited her, and told her that she should have a son, and she should call him Jesus, for he should redeem his people from their sins; and he should rule all nations of the earth, and that all nations should call her blessed forever more.

Whether this is true or not remains to be

proven in the future. There have been so many imposters in the world, so many babes born under pretended miracles, and all have proven to be a failure, that this one may be false, this woman only wishing to hide her shame or court the favor of the Jews.

I am informed that she will be tried by our law, and, if she can give no better evidence of her virtue than she has given to Melker, she will be stoned according to our law, although as Melker says, there never has been a case before with such apparent divine manifestations as has been seen on this occasion. In the past, in various instances, virgins have pretended to be with child by the Holy Ghost, but at the time of their delivery there was no light from the heavens, and no angels talking among the clouds and declaring that this was the King of the Jews. And, as to the truth of these things, the whole of the people of Bethlehem testify to having seen it, and the Roman guard also came out and asked what it meant and they showed by their actions that they were very much alarmed. These things, Melker says, are all declared in the Scriptures to be the sign of his coming. Melker is a man of great learning, and well versed in prophecies, and he

sends you this letter, referring you to those prophecies:

Melker, Priest of the Synagogue of Bethlehem, to the Higher Sanhedrin of the Jews at Jerusalem:

HOLY MASTERS OF ISRAEL:—I, your servant, would call your attention to the words of the prophet in regard to the fore-runner, and the rise as well as the conductor of a great and mighty nation, wherein should dwell the true principles of righteousness and the conductor of the outward formation of a national domain of God upon earth. As evidence of the fact, the vision and affliction that has befallen Zechariah of late is enough to satisfy all men of the coming of the great event; and this babe of Elizabeth is the beginning of better times.

What has occurred here in the last few days, as Jonathan will inform you, forever settles the question that the day of our redemption is drawing nigh. The sections of these divisions are three. First, the general survey; the original foundation and destiny of man in his single state; the proto-evangel; the full development of mankind; the promises to the fathers of the covenant people; Judah, the leader tribe; section sec-

ond, the Mosaic law and the Mosaic outlook; the prophecy of Baalam; section third, the anointed of the Lord; the prophetic covenant in the songs of Israel of the anointed one; and the prophets of the past exile; Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi; Malachi's prophecy of the fore-runner of the Lord. Now, noble masters of Israel, if you will refer to the several sections of the divine word you will not fail to see that all that has been spoken by the prophets in regard to the works of God upon earth has been fulfilled in the last few days in the two events, the birth of the child of Elizabeth and that of Mary of Bethlehem.

Considering the unlimited freedom which some men take with these holy writings of God, as to the above prophecy, subjects us to the severest criticism. It is, however, most satisfactory to see and hear that the divine grandeur and authority of the sacred oracles are in no way dependent on the solution of carnal critics, but rest on an inward light shining everywhere out of the bosom of a profound organic unity and an inter-connected relation with a consistent and united teleology, overleaping all time, the historical present as well as the past, and all the past

brought light in these two events that have just transpired. Indeed, all past time is blending with the present horizon, and the works of God in ages past are just beginning to develop themselves at this particular time, and the present scenes are bringing us close on to the ways of God upon earth. While we reverence these men of God, we should not misappropriate their language. Take, for example, the third section of Isaiah, where he prophesies of the captive Israelites, instead of his consolation to the captive. While one of his words refers to the future condition and the reason therefor, the other is sweet in consolation of the Israelites while in this state of captivity, and full of the blessed promises in the future.

But let the spirit of prophecy bear us on with the prophet into future time, far beyond the kingdoms of this world into a glorious future, regardless of the Roman, Babylonian, or even the Maccabean rule or rules, but never forgetting that the prophet is one who is divinely inspired, and is called, commissioned, and qualified to declare the will as well as the knowledge of God. Yes, he is a seer. His prophecy is of the nature of a vision, involving and enveloping all the facul-

ties of the soul, and placing the prophet in the attitude to God of being outside the body and independent of it. Yea, far better without the body than with it; for the further the soul gets from the body the more active it becomes. This fact is demonstrated in our dreams. The vivid powers of the soul are much more active in dreams than at any other time, the perception is clearer, and the sensitive faculties are much more alive when asleep than when awake. We see this verified in the man dying. His eye is usually brighter, his mind is clearer, his soul is more free and becomes less selfish, as he passes on and nears the eternal state.

So is the prophet. He becomes so personal with God that he uses the personalities with seeming presumption; while it is the indwelling power of God's Spirit inflating the soul and setting the tongue on fire. So was the moving language of the words to which you have been referred. It seems to me those men of God saw distinctly the gathering light; they saw the travailing of the virgin, they saw the helpless infant in the sheep trough; they heard the mighty chanting of the heavenly host; they saw the ambition of human nature in the Roman soldiery aiming to de-

stroy the child's life; and they saw in that infant human nature in its fallen and helpless condition; and it appears as if they saw the advance of that infant into perfect manhood. As he becomes the theme of the world, his advancing nature will triumph over all; as he does escape the Roman authority this day, so he will finally triumph over all the world, and even death itself shall be destroyed.

We, as Jews, place too much confidence in the outward appearance, while the idea we get of the kingdom of heaven is all of a carnal nature, consisting of forms and ceremonies. The prophecies referred to, and many other passages that I might mention, all go to show that the kingdom of God is to begin within us, in the inner life, and rule there, and from the inner nature all outward actions are to flow in conformity with the revealed and written teachings and commands of God. So is the spirit of prophecy. While it uses the natural organs of speech, it at the same time controls all the faculties of life, producing sometimes a real ecstasy, not mechanical nor loss of consciousness, though cut off for the time from external relations. He is thus circumscribed to speak, as did

Balam, the words of God with human life. This is to be held by us Jews as of the first and greatest importance, and we are to remember that his prophecy has the same reference to the future that it does to the past, and has respect to the whole empire of man. While it specifies individuals and nations, it often has reference to doctrines and principles, and in this light Israel is the result of prophecy as a nation with her religious teachings. So is this virgin's babe born to be a ruler of all nations of the earth. The Torah itself goes back to prophecy, as well as every prophet stands on the Torah, and on this rests all prophecy pronouncing condemnation on the disobedient and blessings on the faithful. It was on this principle that the covenant of inheritance was made with Abraham, and in reality, so made with David. Thus all the promises, political, ethical, judicial and ritual, rest on the Torah. In short, the whole administration finds its authority in the prophetic vision, as set forth by the commands of God, to regulate human life—commencing in the inner life and working outward, until the outward is like the inward; and thus advancing on from individuals to nations.

The Messianic prophecy has no other justification than this. On this rests the Church, and on this rests the theocracy. On this rests the glory of the future kingdom of God upon earth.

The whole chain of prophecy is already fulfilled in this babe; but the development is only commencing. He will abolish the old cultus forever, but with man it will develop commensurate with time itself. There are many types in the shadow, in the plant, in the animal. Every time the Romans celebrated a triumph on the Tiber it shadowed forth the coming Cæsar; so every suffering of David, or lamentation of Job, or glory of Solomon—yea, every wail of human sorrow, every throe of human grief, every dying sigh, every falling, bitter tear—was a type, a prophecy of the coming King of the Jews and the Savior of the world. Israel stands as a common factor at every great epoch of history. The shading of the colors of the prophetic painting does not obliterate the prediction of the literal Israel's more glorious future in the kingdom of God. Her historic calling to mediate salvation to the nations is not ended with this newcomer on the stage of carnal life. The prophecy is eschatological,

refining the inner life as well as shaping the outer life in conformity to good laws. Looking also to the end of time and its great importance to us, it has something to teach, and we have something to learn. Along the ages past, all the great, good and happy have first learned their duties, and then perform them; and thus for thousands of years Israel has stood, hope never dying in the Hebrew heart, and has been the only appointed source of knowledge of the true God preserved. And this day she stands as the great factor and center, around which all nations of the earth must come for instructions to guide them, that they may become better and happier.

These secret scrolls, which we Jews received from God by the hand of Moses, are the only hope of the world. If this was lost to mankind, it would be worse than putting out the sun, moon and all the stars of night, for this would be a loss of sacred light to the souls of men. When we consider the surroundings, there never has been a time more propitious than the present for the establishing of the true religion, and it seems, by reviewing our history for hundreds of years past, that this is the time for the ushering in

of the true kingdom of God. The nations of the earth that have been given to idolatry are growing tired of placing confidence in and depending on gods that do not help them in the hour of danger, and they are now wanting a God that can and will answer to their calls.

King Herod sent for me the other day, and after I related to him of the God of the Jews and his works, of the many and mighty deeds he had performed for our fathers and for us as a nation, he seemed to think, if there was such a God as we professed, it was far better than to depend on such gods as the Romans had made, of timber, stone, and iron; and even the gods of gold were powerless. He said if he could know that this babe, that was declared by the angels, was such a God as he that saved the Israelites in the Red Sea, and saved Daniel, and those three from the fearful heat of fire, he would have pursued quite a different course toward him. He was under the impression that he had come to drive the Romans from their possessions, and to reign as a Monarch instead of Cæsar. And I find this to be the general feeling throughout the *world, so far as I can hear; that the people*

want and are ready to receive a God that can demonstrate in his life that he is such a God that the race of men can depend on in time of trouble; and if he can show such power to his friends he will be feared by his enemies, and thus become universally obeyed by all the nations of the earth. And this, I fear, is going to be the trouble with our nation; our people are going to look to him as a temporal deliverer, and will aim to circumscribe him to the Jews alone; and when his actions begin to flow out to all the inhabitants of the world in love and charity, as is most certainly shown forth in the ninth section of the holy prophet, then I fear the Jews will reject him; and, in fact, we are warned of that already in the third section of Jeremiah's word. To avoid this Israel must be taught that the prophecy of Isaiah does not stop with the Babylonian captivity and return to the kingdom of heaven, and that Ezekiel's wheels do not whirl politically nor spiritually in heaven, but upon earth, and have reference to earthly revolutions or changes, and show the bringing to pass of the great events of which this of Bethlehem is the grandest of all.

Neither is the outlook of Daniel to be confined to the shade of the Maccabean wall of

Jewish conquest. Nor are these great questions to be decided by our unsuccessful attempts to find out what the prophet meant or what he might have understood himself to mean; but from the unity, totality, and organic connection of the whole body of prophecy, as referring to the kingdom of this world becoming subject to the kingdom of the Savior of all men. We, as Jews, are the only people that God has entrusted with the great questions, and of course the world will look to and expect us to give interpretation to these questions, and, as we are entrusted with these things, God will hold us responsible if we fail to give the true light on this subject. Up to this time I am fearful the Jews as a nation are as much divided, and perhaps as much mistaken, as to the nature of his works, as any other people. I find, by conversing with the Romans, Greeks, and others, that all their knowledge of these things of Jewish expectation in a Redeemer has been obtained from the Jews, either directly or indirectly, and it was through them Herod got the idea of his being a temporal King, and to rule and reign by the might of carnal weapons; whereas, if *we consult the spiritual import of the prophets,*

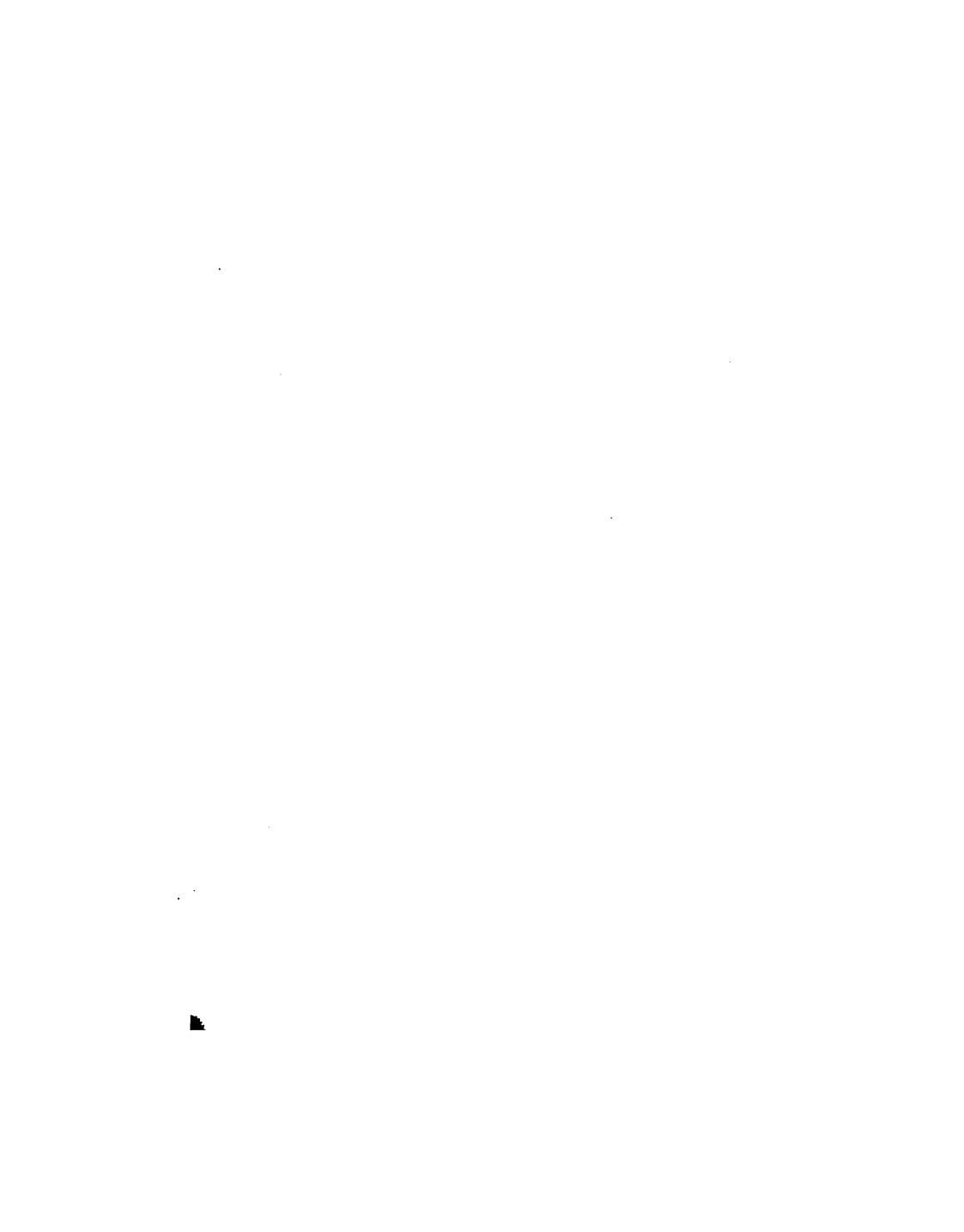
his office is to blend all nations in one common brotherhood, and establish love in the place of law, and that heart should throb high with love to heart and under this rule a universal peace. Wherever one should meet another, they would meet as friends; for what else can the prophet mean, in section nine, where he shows that this King shall destroy all carnal weapons and convert them to a helpful purpose, and thus become the active worker in doing good to all men, and teaching all men to do good to each other?

By reading all the scrolls of God we find that the unity and totality of all the prophets go to bear us out in this idea, and all have reference to this Babe of Bethlehem. If we consult them as to the time taking the revolutions of Ezekiel's wheels, they show plainly that the revolutions of the different governments of the world fix this as the time. Next, consult them in regard to the individuals connected with this great event. These are pointed to as the virgin wife, by Zechariah; next the place has been pointed out and named; then the light and the appearing of the angels have all been set forth, and also the opposition of the Romans has been de-

clared. Now, I ask the High Court of the living God to look well on these things, and tell us how men that lived in different ages of the world, that lived in different portions of the country—men that never knew each other—men that were not prophesying for a party—men that had no personal interest in the subject as men—men that jeopardized, and some of them lost, their lives on account of having uttered these prophecies—how could they all point out the place, the time, and the names of the parties so plain and clear, if it was not revealed to them and ordained by God himself? I understand that the Romans and some of the priests have been saying that Zechariah was a hypocrite, and that Mary was a bad woman. Such might be the case, so far as man is able to judge; but who, I ask, can forge such truth as these prophecies, and make them come true? Or who can cause light to descend from the heavens and the angels to come down and make the declaration that this was the Son of God, King of the Jews?

Noble Masters of the Sanhedrin, I was not alone. I am not the only witness of these things. The principal people of Bethlehem saw them and heard them as I did. I

would say to you, if this is not the Jews' King, then we need not look for any other; for every line of prophecy has been most completely fulfilled in him; and if he does not appear and save his own people I shall despair of ever being released, and I shall believe that we have misinterpreted the meaning of all the prophets. But I feel so sure that this is he, I shall wait in expectation and with much anxiety, and I have no fears of any harm befalling him. All the Romans in the world can not harm him; and although Herod may rage, he may destroy all the infants in the world, the same angels that attended his birth will watch over him through life, and the Romans will have to contend with the same God that Pharaoh did, and will meet with similar defeat.



VOLUME II.

GAMALIEL'S REPORT TO THE SANHEDRIN.


Of his interview with Joseph and Mary in Moab, in regard to the conception, birth, child and boyhood of Christ. Translated from the Talmuds.

THE *hagiographa* or holy writings, found in the St. Sophia mosque at Constantinople, made by Gamaliel, in the talmuds of the Jews, 27 B. It seems that Gamaliel was sent by the Sanhedrin to interview Joseph and Mary in regard to this child Jesus. He says:

"I found Joseph and Mary in the city of Mecca, in the land of Ammon or Moab. But I did not find Jesus. When I went to the place where I was told he was, he was somewhere else; and thus I traced him from place to place, until I despaired of finding him at all. Whether he discovered that I was in search of him and he did it to elude me, I cannot tell, though I think it most likely the former was the reason for his mother says he is bashful and shuns company.

"Joseph is a wood workman. He is very tall and ugly. His hair looks as though it might have been dark auburn when young.

His eyes are gray and vicious. He is anything but prepossessing in his appearance, and he is as gross and grum as he looks. He is but a poor talker, and it seems that yes and no is the depth of his mind. I am satisfied he is very disagreeable to his family. His children look very much like him, and upon the whole I should call them a third-rate family. I asked him who were his parents. He said his father's name was Jacob, and his grandfather was Matthew. He did not like to talk on the subject. He is very jealous. I told him that we had heard he had had a vision, and I was sent to ascertain the facts in the case. He said he did not call it a vision; he called it a dream. He said after he and Mary had agreed to marry, it seemed that something told him that Mary was with child; that he did not know whether he was asleep or awake, but it made such an impression on his mind that he concluded to have nothing more to do with her; and while he was working one day under a shed, all at once a man in snowy white stood by his side and told him not to doubt the virtue of Mary, for she was holy before the Lord; that the child conceived in her was not by man, but by the Holy Ghost, and that



the child should be free from human passions. In order to this he must—that is, his humanity must—be of the extract of an almah, (that is the Hebrew word for virgin), that he might endure all things, and not resist, and fill the demands of prophecy. He said the angel told him that this child should be great, and should rule all the kingdoms of this world. He said that this child should set up a new kingdom, wherein should dwell righteousness and peace, and that all the kingdoms of this world which should oppose him God would utterly destroy. I asked him, How would a virgin conceive of herself without the germination of the male? He said: “This is the work of God. He has brought to life the womb of Elizabeth, so she had conceived and will bare a son in her old age who will go before and tell the people of the coming of this King.’ After telling me all these things, he disappeared like the melting down of a light. I then went and told Mary what had occurred, and she told me that the same angel, or one like him, had appeared to her and told her the same things. So I married Mary thinking that if what the angel had told us was true, it would be greatly to our advantage; but I am fearful we are mis-

taken. Jesus seems to take no interest in us, nor anything else much. I call him lazy and careless. I don't think he will ever amount to much, much less be a king. If he does, he must do a great deal better than he has been doing. I asked him how long after that interview with the angel before the child was born. He said he did not know, but he thought it was seven or eight months. I asked him where they were at the time. He said in Bethlehem. The Roman commander had given orders for all the Jews to go on a certain day to be enrolled as tax-payers, and he and Mary went to Bethlehem, as the nearest place of enrollment; and while there this babe was born. I asked if anything strange occurred there that night. He said that the people were much excited, but he was so tired that he had gone to sleep, and saw nothing. He said towards day there were several priests came in to see them and the babe, and gave them many presents. And the news got circulated that this child was to be king of the Jews, and it created such an excitement that he took the child and his mother and came to Moab for protection, for fear the Romans would kill the child, to keep it from being a rival to the Romans.

"I discovered that all Joseph's ideas were of a selfish kind. All he thought of was himself. Mary is altogether a different character, and she is too noble to be the wife of such a man. She seems to be about 40 or 45 years of age, abounds with a cheerful and happy spirit and is full of happy fancies. She is fair to see, rather fleshy, has soft and innocent looking eyes, and seems to be naturally a good woman. I asked her who her parents were, and she said her father's name was Eli, and her mother's name was Anna, her grandmother's name was Pennel, a widow of the tribe of Asher, of great renown. I asked her if Jesus was the son of Joseph. She said he was not. I asked her to relate to me the circumstances of the child's history. She said that one day while she was grinding some meal there appeared a stranger at the door in shining raiment, which shown as bright as the light. She was very much alarmed at his presence, and trembled like a leaf; but all her fears were calmed when he spoke to her; for he said: 'Mary, thou art loved by the Lord, and he has sent me to tell thee that thou shalt have a child; that this child shall be great and rule all nations of the earth.' She continued: 'I im-

mediately thought of my engagement to Joseph, and supposed that was the way the child was to come; but he astonished me the more when he told me that cousin Elizabeth had conceived and would bare a son, whose name was to be John; and my son should be called Jesus. This caused me to remember that Zecharias had seen a vision and disputed with the angel, and for that he was struck with dumbness, so that he could no longer hold the priest's office. I asked the messenger if Joseph knew anything of the matter. He said that he had told Joseph that I was to have a child by order of the Holy Ghost, and that he was to redeem his people from their sins, and was to reign over the whole world; that every man should confess to him and he should rule over all the kings of the earth.'

"I asked her how she knew he was an angel, and she said he told her so, and then she knew he was an angel from the way he came and went. I asked her to describe how he went away from her; and she said that he seemed to melt away like the extinguishing of a light. I asked her if she knew anything of John Baptist. She said he lived in the mountains of Judea the last she knew

of him. I asked her if he and Jesus were acquainted, or did they visit. She said 'they did not know each other, she did not think.

"I asked her if at the time this angel, as she called him, visited her, she was *almah* (that is, virgin). She said she was; that she had never showed to man, nor was known by any man. I asked her if she at that time maintained her *fourchette*; and after making her and Joseph to understand what I meant, they both said she had, and Joseph said this was the way he had of testing her virtue. I asked her if she knew when conception took place. She said she did not. I asked her to tell me if she at any time felt any peculiar sensation about the clitoris, and she said she had not. I asked her if she was in any pain in bearing, or delivering this child. She said, 'None of any consequence.' I asked her if he was healthy; to give me a description of his life. She said he was perfectly healthy; that she never heard him complain of any pain or dissatisfaction; his food always agreed with him; that he would eat anything set before him, and if anyone else complained he would often say he thought it good enough, much better than we deserved. She said that Joseph was a little hard to

please, but this boy had answered him so often, and his answers were so mild and yet so complete, that he had almost broke him of finding fault. She said he settled all the disputes of the family; that no odds what was the subject or who it was, one word from him closed all mouths, and what gave him such power was, his words were always accidental, unpretending, and spoken as though they were not intended as a rebuke, but merely as a decision. I asked her if she had ever seen him angry or out of humor. She said she had seen him apparently vexed and grieved at the disputes and follies of others, but had never seen him angry. I asked her if he had any worldly aspirations after money or wealth, or a great name, or did he delight in fine dress, like the most of the youngsters. She said that was one thing that vexed her, he seemed to take no care of his person, he did not care whether he was dressed or not, or whether the family got along well or ill; it was all alike to him. She said she talked to him about it, and he would look at her a little grieved and say, 'Woman, (for such he always called me). you don't know who I am.' Indeed she *said* he takes so little interest in the things

of the world and the great questions of the day, they were beginning to despair of his ever amounting to much—much less be a king, as the angel said he would be; if so, he would have to act very different from what he was acting at that time. I told her that the Jewish Doctors contended that the amorous nature came from the male. I asked her if she had ever seen in the private life of Jesus any signs of such disposition. She had not. I asked her if she saw in him any particular fondness for female society. She said she had not; if anything, rather to the contrary; that the young *bethaul*, (the word in the Hebrew for the young women), were all very fond of him and were always seeking his society, and yet he seemed to care nothing for them; and if they appeared too fond of him, he almost treated them with scorn. He will often get up and leave them, and wander away and spend his time in meditation and prayer. He is a perfect ascetic in his life. 'When I see how the people like to be with him, and ask him questions, and seem to take such delight with his answers,—both men and women,—it almost vexes me. They say there is a young woman in Bethany whom he intends to marry; but unless he

changes his course very much he will never be qualified to have a family. But I don't believe the report. He never seems to me to care anything about women when he is in my presence."

Thus it seems that Joseph and Mary have both lost all confidence in his becoming anything. They seem to think that the Sanhedrin should do something for him to get him out and let him show himself to the people. I tried to console them by telling them that my understanding of the prophecy was that he had to come to the high priesthood first, and there work in the spiritual domination of the heart; and when he had brought about a unity of heart and a oneness of aim, it would be easy enough to establish his political claim; and all who would not willingly submit to him, it would be an easy matter with the sword of Joshua or Gideon to bring under his control. It seems to me that his parents' idea is of a selfish character; that they are caring nothing about the Jewish government, nor the Roman oppression. All they think of is self-exultation, and to be personally benefited by their son's greatness. But I told them that they were mistaken; that the building up of the kingdom of heaven

was not to be done by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, and it would not do for us to use carnal weapons, nor to expect carnal pleasures derived therefrom; that it was not my understanding of the prophecy that this king was to use such weapons either for himself or for the benefit of a party, but for the good of all men; that his dominion was to be universal, and it was to be of a spiritual character; that he was sent to the lost and not to the found.

"His parents told me of an old man who lived on the road to Bethany that had been once a priest, a man of great learning, and well skilled in the laws and prophets, and that Jesus was often there with him reading the law and the prophets together, that his name was Massalian, and that I might find Jesus there. But he was not there. Massalian said he was often at Bethany with a young family, and he thought there was some love affair between him and one of the girls. I asked him if he had seen anything like a courtship between them. He said he had not, but inferred from their intimacy, and from the fondness on the woman's part, as well as from the laws of nature, that such would be the case. I asked him to give me

an outline of the character of Jesus. He said that he was a young man of the finest thought and feeling he ever saw in his life; that he was the most apt in his answers and solutions of difficult problems of any man of his age he had ever seen; that his answers seem to give more universal satisfaction—so much so that the oldest philosopher would not dispute with him, or in any manner join issue with him, or ask the second time. I asked Massalian who taught him to read and interpret the law and the prophets. He said that his mother said that he had always known how to read the law; that his mind seemed to master it from the beginning; and into the laws of nature and the relation of man to his fellow in his teachings or talks, he gives a deeper insight, inspiring mutual love and strengthening the common trust of society. Another plan he has of setting men right with the laws of nature: He turns nature into a great law book of illustrations, showing that every bush was a flame, every rock a fountain of water, every star a pillar of fire, and every cloud the one that leads to God. He makes all nature preach the doctrine of trust, in the divine Fatherhood. *He speaks of the lilies as pledges of God's*

care, and points to the fowls as evidence of his watchfulness over the interests of human affairs. Who can measure the distance between God and the flower of the field? What connection is there between man and the lily? By such illustrations he creates a solicitude in man that seems to awe him into reverence, and he becomes attracted towards heavenly thought, and feels that he is in the presence of one that is superior. In his talk he brings one to feel he is very near the presence of God. He says how much more your Father? The plane is one, though the intermediate points are immeasurably distant. Thus by beginning with a flower he reasons upward to the absolute, and then descends and teaches lessons of trust in a loving Father. The lessons of trust in God give a quiet solicitude to the anxious listener, that only awakens an appetite and makes him long for more; and it often seems, when he has brought his hearer to the highest point of anxiety, he suddenly breaks off and leaves his company as though he cared nothing for him. While Jesus in his talk brings all these illustrations to make man feel his nearness to his kindred, man, teaching also their relation to and dependence upon God, although his method is

happy, it does not seem to me that it is the most successful; for, although he teaches that man and the flower and the bird drink from the same fountain and are fed from the same table, he seems at the same time to do everything to excite suspicion and prejudice. We that are watching him to see his divine mission commence, he is continually tantalizing our expectation, as well as mocking our natural reason and desires. When a man separates himself from all other men, both in point of doctrine as well as discipline, he takes a very great risk on his part—especially when he confines God to one channel, and that one of his own dictation. A man that assumes these responsible positions must have vast resources from which to draw, or he will sink in the whirlpool which his own impertinence has created. Though Jesus in his teachings, or talks (though his words sound so much like the teaching of Hillel or Shammai that I must call it teaching, though he had no special scholars), from Jesus' teaching we learn that God is a spirit, and God is a Father, and he says these are the only two things that are essential for man to know. Then he illustrates this to the *parents*, and asks them what would they do

for their children. He was telling some mothers a circumstance of a mother starving herself to feed her child, and then applied it to God as our father; and they commenced shouting, they were so happy; and Jesus got up and left the house in seeming disgust.

"Massalian says he is tempted at times to become impatient with Jesus, as he devotes so much time to details. It seems almost a waste of time for a man who came to save a world to be lingering over a special case of disease. He thinks he could hasten Jesus' physical department. Why not speak one word and remove every patient from his sick bed at the same hour; What a triumph this would be! I asked him if Jesus had healed anyone. He said no, not as yet; but if he is to be king of the Jews, he was to heal all nations, and why not do it at once? If he would, there would be nothing more required to establish his kingship. But I said to him, 'Is it not equally so with God's creative power? See what time and labor it takes to bring forth a grain of corn. Why not have caused the earth to bring forth every month instead of every year? Christ was talking in defense of his Father. The people must learn to love and obey the Father

before they would reverence the Son.' Yes, he said, the God that Jesus represented was one that the people might love and venerate; that he was a God of love, and had no bloody designs to execute on even a bad man, provided he would be bad no more.

"It is to be noted that in all Jesus' talk there became manifest references to the future. Many of his statements were like a sealed letter—not to be opened but by time. A grain of mustard was to result in a large tree. All his ideas refer to the future; like the parent helping the child with his burden of to-day by telling of the blessings of to-morrow; and by making to-day the seed-corn of to-morrow; keeping the action for to-day under moral control by making the morrow the day of judgment. He stated further that Jesus was a young man who was the best judge of human nature he had ever seen; that he thought at times he could tell men their thoughts and expose their bad principles; and while he had all these advantages of life, he seemed not to care for them nor to use them abusively. He seemed to like all men—one as well as another—So much so that his own parents have become disgusted with him and have almost cast him

off. But Jesus has such a peculiar temperament that he seems not to care, and is as well satisfied with one as another. He said that Jesus seemed fond of Mary and Martha, Who lived at Bethany, and probably I might find him there.

"Massalian is a man of very deep thought and most profound judgment. He has made the Scriptures his study all his life. He, too, is a good judge of human nature, and he is satisfied that Jesus is the Christ. He said that Jesus seemed to understand the prophecy by intuition. I asked him where Jesus was taught to read the prophecy. He said that his mother said that Jesus could read from the beginning; that no one had ever taught him to read. He said that he, in making quotations from the prophets, was sometimes mistaken, or his memory failed him; but Jesus could correct him every time without the scroll; and that sometimes he thought Jesus was certainly mistaken, but never in a single instance was he wrong. I asked him to describe his person to me, so that I might know him if I should meet him. He said, "If ever you meet him you will know him. While he is nothing but a man, there is something about him that distinguishes him

from every other man. He is the picture of his mother, only he has not her smooth, round face. His hair is a little more golden than hers, though it is as much from sunburn as anything else. He is tall, and his shoulders are a little drooped. His visage is thin and of a swarthy complexion, though this is from exposure. His eyes are large and a soft blue, and rather dull and heavy. The lashes are long, and his eye-brows very large. His nose is that of a Jew. In fact, he reminds me of an old-fashioned Jew in every sense of the word. He is not a great talker, unless there is something brought up about heaven and divine things, and then his tongue moves glibly and his eye lights up with a peculiar brilliancy; though there is one peculiarity about Jesus; he never argues a question; he never disputes. He will commence and state facts, and they are on such a solid basis that nobody will have the boldness to dispute with him. Though he has such mastership of judgment, he takes no pride in confuting his opponents, but always seems to be sorry for them. I have seen him attacked by the Scribes and doctors of the law, and they would seem like little children learning their lessons under a master. His strongest points

are in the spiritual power of the law, and the intentions of the prophets. The young people tried to get him to take a class of them and teach them; but he utterly refused.' This Jew is convinced that he is the Messiah of the world.

"I went from there to Bethany, but Jesus was not there. They said he and Lazarus were away, they could not tell where. I went and saw Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and had a long talk with them. They were very pleasant and nice young maids, and Mary is quite handsome. I teased her about Jesus, but they both denied that Jesus was anything like a lover; he was only a friend; though this is so common for young maids I did not know whether to believe them or not, until I told them my real business. And when I told them that this was the same person that was born of the virgin in Bethlehem some twenty-six years before, and that his mother had told me all the facts in the case, they seemed deeply interested in the affair. They then told me upon their honor that Jesus never talked or even hinted to either of them on the subject of marriage. Martha blushed, and said she wished he had. If he was to be king, she

would like to be queen. I asked them if they had ever seen him in the company of young virgins. They said they had not. I asked them if they had heard him talk about young girls, or if he sought their society more than that of men; and they both declared they had not; and they were very much surprised that he did not. I asked them what he talked of when in their company; and they said, he was not much in their company; that he and their brother would go upon the house-top and stay there half the night, and some nights all night, talking and arguing points of interest to them both. Mary said she had often gone near, so she could listen to them; for she loved to hear him talk, he was so mild and unpretending, and then was so intelligent that he was different from any and all other young men she had ever seen. I asked them what was their brother's opinion of him. They said he thought there never was such a man on earth. He thought him to be one of God's prophets. He said when they were out in the mountains, as they are most all the time, Jesus can tell him all about the flowers, trees and rocks, can tell him everything in the world, and that none of the wild animals are afraid of him. He

says often the stag and the wolf will come and stand for Jesus to stroke their mane. and seem almost loth to go away from him. He says that no poisonous serpent will offer to hiss at him. Brother thinks he is perfectly safe if Jesus is with him. I asked them if he had ever told their brother anything about himself. They said if he had their brother had not told them.

"Now, Masters of Israel, after having made this investigation of this matter; after tracing Jesus from his conception to the present time; after getting all the information that is to be had on this important subject, and getting it from the parties that are more likely to tell the truth, from the fact they are disinterested parties; and then taking a prophetic as well as a historical view of the subject, I have come to the conclusion that this is the Christ that we are looking for. And as a reason for my conclusion, I will call your attention to the following facts; First, to the prophecy, Isaiah, section 7; 'And he said, Hear now, saith the Lord. Oh, house of David, is it a small thing for you? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name God with men.

Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good; for before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that God abhorrest shall be forsaken of her king.' Section 8: 'Bind the testimony; seal the law among his disciples; the Lord will hide his face from the house of Jacob, and we will look for him.' Here is a literal fulfillment of this word of the Most High God, so clear and plain that none may mistake. Jeremiah, 31st section: 'Turn, oh virgin, to thy people, for the hand of the Lord is upon thee; for the Lord shall create a new thing in the earth: a woman shall compass a man.' Here again is set forth the same things that Isaiah speaks of, and the same things that I have learned from Mary. Micah, section 5: 'Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, thou art little among the thousands of Judah; out of thee shall come forth unto me him that shall rule my people. He is from everlasting; and I will give them up until the time she travaileth to bring forth my first born, that he may rule all people.' Here we have the city, the virgin, the office, his manner of life, the hunting him by the Sanhedrin. All these things are under our eyes as full and complete as I now could

write them, who have all this testimony given in this letter. How can we as a people dispute these things? In the 49th section of Genesis, making reference to the history that is now upon us the writer says: 'A captive shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-maker from him, until Shiloh come, and gather his people between his feet and keep them forever.' "

VOLUME III.

REPORT OF CAIAPHAS TO THE SANHEDRIN CONCERNING THE EXECUTION OF JESUS.

Records of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin, by Eliezer Pyran, B. 22. Taken in Constantinople, October 16, 1883.

CAIAPHAS, priest of the Most High God, to the masters of Israel, greeting:

In obedience to your call for a reason of my action in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, and in defense of my conduct, I beg leave to submit the following for your consideration: I would assure you that it was not on account of personal malice, envy or hate, that existed in my own nature, nor for the want of a willingness upon my part to conform to the Jewish law in its strictest sense. I had but very little personal knowledge of the Nazarene. The most I knew of this man, was from outside sources. Nor was it because he claimed to be king of the Jews, nor because he said he was the Son of God; (I would that he were,) nor because he prophesied or ignored the holy temple. No, nor all

of these combined. There is a cause, and a more weighty matter, back of all these things that controlled my action in the matter. Therefore, I hope you will investigate the reasons that I may give strictly on legal principles.

In order that you may be able to see, and weigh the question fully, and remember the responsibility that rests upon me according to the laws of our nation, I will ask you to go back with me to the chronicles of our history as a commonwealth. First, our faith is pledged to one living and true God, this God being indescribable, unchangeable and incomprehensible, and of course unnameable. But yet in our daily communications with, and our applications to him, he has been pleased to give us his name, or his several names, according to his relations to us, and they are found nowhere, only in the ark of his holy temple—there where he presents to us his strength and power. He calls himself, *Eloi*; which means almighty in strength; that he can do what he will without effort; that he does the greatest thing as easy as he does the least. This makes him different from all beings. In this holy ark he records himself *Elaah*—existing without beginning, and no

contingency as to his end. Again, he writes himself *Hhelejon*—unchangeable; that is, nothing but his own will can change him. Again, he records his name, *Jah*—knowledge that comprehends without being comprehended. Again, he is written, *Adonai*—full and free, and freely full. Combining the several names, we have *Jehovah*—the Hebrew God. A man never can go wrong while he can pronounce this name in its comprehensive sense. This is where the Zealots, the Sadducees and Essenes had their origin, and it is the want of being able to pronounce this name in its comprehensive sense that causes so much dissension among the Jews. Jesus could pronounce this name, but he stole it out of the temple, as I am credibly informed.

But the object of calling your attention to pronouncing this name, with all its bearings, may be seen if we turn to the third Book, Leviticus, section ten, wherein is the special order made by our God to Moses, that we should offer the bullock, the ram, the flour and oil, and the people should fast seven days, and this should be *kaphar*, or atonement, for the sins of all the people. Now, unless Moses was deceived, he has deceived us, or Jesus of Nazareth is a false teacher; for all

he teaches is *metanoieite*, *metanoieite*, as though a man's being sorry for a crime would make restitution to the offended party. A man might repent ever so much, but what good would that do towards healing the man he had injured? None in the least. This mode of making atonement was ordained of God and revealed to Moses; but if man has nothing to do but to repent, the disease carries its own remedy with it. So a man can sin as often as he may wish to. Look at the first book, section three, "And God said to Abraham, by his own mouth, that each and all that were circumcised by the cutting of the prepus should be saved." This should be the seal of the covenant. Now, if this is not true, God must go against his own contract, violate his own promises, as well as deceive the faith and cheat the obedience of his own children. This is all so if Jesus' teaching be true, for he sets up *table* (baptism) as the seal of God. I refer you to section ten, division first, where God said to Moses, that he had changed the laws, converted the elements for the protection of his people, and with his own arm had delivered them out of a strong compact; and that they might *remember*, and that the generation to be

born might remember and never forget to trust in him when in danger, he said that once every year we should roast a kid or lamb, and eat it with unleaven bread, and this should be the sign that we would trust in him in all times of danger. Now Jesus teaches that common bread and wine are to be used instead thereof—a thing unheard of. And not only so, something that is altogether repugnant to God, and something that fosters drunkenness, and is well qualified to excite men's passions. And oh, ye Masters of Israel, but think once. Jesus calls himself the son of God: claims to have been born of *Almah* (the Hebrew word for virgin); that he and his Father are one—they are equal. These things will establish the following conclusions: If he is right, his Father is false. If they are one, then their teaching should be one; and if his teachings are true, God's must be wrong, or there are not those perfections in him that we learn in pronouncing his holy name. By tolerating the teachings of Jesus, we say to the Romans that all of our former teachings are false; that the Hebrew's God is not to be trusted; that he is weak, wanting in forethought; that he is vacillating, and not to

be trusted, much less to be honored and obeyed. Thus the world will lose confidence in our God, and confidence in us as a religious people. This is the impregnation of the whole atmosphere with moral pollution. It does not only cut off, but blocks the way of all Jews from heaven; not only this, it excludes our hope in the salvation of our forefathers, who have obeyed God in his ordinances, believed in his promises, and shouted in the triumphs of a holy life for fourteen hundred years. He entirely ignores God's holy temple—the house God had built by our fathers under his own supervision, where he promised to dwell with his children, to hear their prayers, and to be pleased with their sacrifices. This temple is the bond of the Jews. Here all men can come and be blessed. It is the earthly home of the souls of men—the place where men may hide from the storms of sin and persecution. This temple is where the foolish can learn wisdom, the place where the naked soul can be clothed, and where the hungry may be fed. This is the grandest gift of our Father. Jesus perfectly ignores this temple; says that the priests have made it a den of thieves; and sets up a sneer, and even scoffs at its

sacred ordinances, and with a sort of a selfish triumph says it shall be destroyed; and from his manner of saying it, I have no doubt would be glad how quick. But what would be the condition of our people if this temple were removed? Where would be the use of priesthood if the temple were absolved? Where would we find an answer by Urim and Thummin? How would the soul of man be purified, if the holy *Bathkole*, the *Euroch* of God, should depart? There in that sacred temple of God he has been burning to the consuming of sin and the purifying of the heart since our return from bondage in Babylon. My argument is, if the temple is destroyed, or even forsaken by the Jews, we as a nation are finally ruined. We might as well put our necks under the feet of idolatry and give up all hope.

One more subject I place before my Masters of Israel. Is it compatible with our religion, or is it consistent with philosophy, or admitted in his holy Word, that there can be more gods than one? When we pronounce *Ele Laah Sha dai Hyeloyon-Adonai* which is *Jehovah*), there can be but one living God. By reference to section six, No. 4, he says by mouth of Moses, when he was

all aglow with the glory of God—and remember he speaks either by mouth or quill, it is he that speaks, and not man—he says, “The Lord your God is one God; there can be but one. I am and have been with you; I brought you up; I delivered you out of a strong compact; I delivered you out of their hand, and kept you dry, while your enemies were drowned in the sea. I will not forsake you. I promised your Father I would not. But if you forsake me, then desolation will come upon you, and have you in swift destruction.” In section five, three and four, of David’s Song of Joy: “I am God alone. If I turn to the right or to the left, if I go down into the depths of the sea, or into the center of the earth, or over the heavens, I should find no companion.” In section third he says, “I am God alone, and alone I am God; beside me there is no help for man nor angels.” Then in section 13, this command has been given: “Thou shalt pay to the Lord thy God once a year a half-shekel of silver, that thou and thy children, and all the strangers that are in thy gate, may know there is no God beside me, on whom they may call in time of danger.” Now, having all the commands and teachings from the very lips of God himself

before my eyes, and being held responsible for the soundness of our doctrine and the proper inculcation of the same among the people of the Jews, what was I to do? Could I stand as the priest of the Most High God, and see your blessed religion perverted by an impostor? Could I stand and see the holy temple of our God deserted and forsaken; Could I stand and see all the holy ordinances, which have been appointed by our God for securing salvation to Israel, perverted by an impostor? All the blessed doctrines that were appointed for the government and the instruction of the priesthood, thence to be imparted to the youth of our land, set aside, and that by one that could show no authority, only the authority of John Baptist, who could give no authority only the one who sent him to baptize, and he could not tell who he was nor from whence he came? Hence you can see the responsible position that I as the high priest of God and of the Jewish Church occupied. According to our laws I was made responsible, and stood between my God and my people, to protect them in doctrine and government. I refer you to the capitulation made by the Sanhedrin and Augustus Cæsar, in the holy *Tosephta* of the talmuds. We

submitted to taxation by the Romans, and the Romans are to protect our holy religion from foreign foes, in order that the holy temple or any of its sacred ordinances should never be molested, nor the holy city, Jerusalem, be polluted by Roman idolatry. Now the insinuating plan taken by Jesus was well qualified to deceive the common people. It had already led many to forsake the temple, and hold her ordinances in derision, as well as to neglect the teachings of the priest or to pay tithes for their supplies. He had already inculcated into the Jewish mind his pernicious ways of being saved to that extent that the Jewish cause was almost gone. There are two reasons for this: First, the people to whom he preached were an ignorant set, and knew but very little about doctrine of any kind. They are a restless sort of men, who are always finding fault and wanting something new, and never associate with the more enlightened part of the community in order to learn. Another reason of his having many followers is, his doctrines are congenial to unsanctified flesh. They are so suited to human nature that they require no sacrifices; they need not go to the temple to worship God; they need not

fast, and they can pray when and where they please; they need pay no tithes to keep up the temple or the priesthood, but every man can be his own priest, and worship God as he chooses. All this is so compatible with human nature that, although he has not been preaching over three years, he has more followers to-day than Abraham has, and they have become perfectly hostile towards the Jews that are faithful to their God; and if it had not been for the Roman soldiers, on the day of the execution, we would have had one of the bloodiest insurrections ever known to the Jewish commonwealth. I am told that there was never seen such a concourse of people assembled at Jerusalem as at the cross. One of my guards informs me that there were several hundred thousand, and, although there were two others crucified at the same time, Jesus was the great center of attraction. They would call out, "Who is this Jesus of Nazareth? What is his crime?" Some of his friends would cry out, "Nothing; he is being executed because he was a friend to the poor. Take him down! Take him down," they would cry out, and the soldiers would have to use their spears to keep them back. But when he yielded up the ghost he

proved to all that he was hypostatical (that is a human body), and the *lodicurios* had come from the iclandic covenant, and his *trinitatis unitas* was all a sham, for how could this unpronounced name suffer or be captured by men, or die, unless he is the one that is to die for the many? And if so, I was only accomplishing God's holy purposes, which exonerates me from guilt.

But it seems to me a necessity that he should be removed. That this may be evident to your minds, I ask you to contrast our present condition with the past. Jesus of Nazareth spent two years in Egypt under the instruction of Rabbi Joshua, and learned the art of thaumaturgy to perfection, as has never been taught in any of the schools of necromancy among the heathen. If the healing miracles of Jesus are true, as they must be (for they are so acknowledged by his foes as well as his friends), he must have learned it from Horus and Serapis, as practiced by those heathen priests. He came back to Palestine as physician, and was by nature an enthusiast as well as a Hebrew patriarch, and when John's preaching excited idealistic minds, Jesus also went to that teacher, and *was inspired* by him to inculcate and promul-

gate his doctrines. Notwithstanding his youth and inexperience, Jesus started out as a public orator and teacher with the doctrines of John, and in that capacity referred exclusively to his authority, as every public teacher in these days has to be ordered by some acknowledged authority. As long as John was at large, Jesus in the capacity of an itinerant teacher and physician roused the people of Galilee to *metanoia* (repentance of sin), to bring about a restoration of the kingdom of heaven. He met with the same opposition that John did from those who would not admit that they were more sinful than their progenitors were, or that asceticism was the proper means for the restoration of the kingdom of heaven. But he met with the same success among the lower classes, such as foreign harlots, Sodomites, publicans and other Roman agents, but the intelligent portion remained cold and unmoved by his enthusiasm. The cures which he performed appeared miraculous to his followers, but most ridiculous to the intelligent Jews, and those men of sober and reflective minds.

Jesus embraced the humanitarian doctrine of the Hillelites, presenting conspicuously the cosmopolitan spirit of Judaism, and he

did it almost in the words of Hillet, who had taught it before. Their faith and doctrine being alike, it was not hard for him to create excitement, or to find plenty of followers. In addition to all this, he taught a system of low morals, and so void of ritualistic ideas that it was easy for him to get any amount of followers. He taught the people that there was but one living and true God, and that his father was merged into himself, and could not manifest himself only through him, which theory would confute itself if they would only stop to reflect, for as he was hypostatical or corporeal, his assistance was cut off from all that was not immediately in his presence, which is altogether incompatible with the faith of the Jews. Right in the blaze of this doctrine he would teach that there was a special providence, as well as a general providence, as if there could be a general providence without a God that could be present in all places at all times, as we learn in pronouncing his name. He teaches that the dead will rise and live again in a future state of happiness or misery according as they lived here. Therefore he teaches future rewards and punishments, but he being present how can he reward in the

future? He teaches the revelation and the prophets, but contradicts all they teach. He teaches the election of Israel by the Almighty, but ignores the doctrines of Israel. He teaches the eternity of God's laws, and promises in the super-importance of the humanitarian over the ritual laws and doctrines, but I don't think he wished to abolish the latter, or even the traditional laws, but merely to supersede them by a higher life. The natural result of all this was that he disregarded the laws of Levitical cleanness, which were so important to the Shammaites and Essenes, and so important to the Hillelites. This is the point where division commenced, and the breach grew wider and wider until an insurrection must have been the result. He so far cut himself loose from the Jews that he ate with unclean sinners, publicans and lepers, and permitted harlots to touch him, while his disciples went so far as to eat their meals, without washing themselves. Furthermore, he looked upon the whole of the Levitical institutions, temple, sacrifices, and priesthood included, as necessary no longer, and not worth the life of the animal. This was certainly the opinion of the Hillelites. Jesus, it seems, found in this Hillelite school a party

furnished to hand, ready to take up with his heresy (and a large party they are, almost sufficient to divide the whole Jewish commonwealth.) They teach the repentance of sin, the practice of benevolence and charity, the education of the young, and good will towards mankind, as possessing much more moral worth than all the Levitical cleanness, or compliance with the whole moral law given to us by our God to govern us. His preaching was of the parabolical style. He would rely on a text of scripture, for he seems to hold the scriptures in high veneration, so his preaching was on the *midrash* style of the Scribes—a maxim expressed in the style of Solon or of Sirach's son. His great object was to come as near the Jewish theology as possible so as to destroy the Jews entirely, and establish his own. Hence he resorted to the allegorical method of the Egyptian Hebrews, uttering many good and wise sayings, which were not new to the learned, but which were taken from the common wisdom of the country, which was known by all who were acquainted with the literature of the Rabbis. But they were new to his class of hearers who were not accustomed to listen to the wise. He had no education, compara-

tively speaking. He was full of nervous excitement, all of which went to inspire his hearers with enthusiasm. He took but little care of his health or person; cared not for his own relatives. He traveled mostly on foot in the company of his disciples and some suspicious women, and lived on the charity of his friends. He seemed to take no notice of the political affairs of his country; would as soon be governed by one nation as another. In fact, it seemed if he had any preference, it was for the Romans. It seems that he became so infatuated that he really thought he was head of the kingdom of heaven. This manner of preaching, along with his presumption, aroused his enemies to a powerful pitch, and it was all I could do to keep the zealots from mobbing him in the temple. They had no confidence in a doctrine that set the Jewish laws at naught, and mocked the priesthood of God, and they with the Sadducees and Scribes were not willing to submit to a man who acknowledged no authority higher than himself; and was seemingly endeavoring to overturn everything that they held more sacred and dearer than life. Jesus' mode and manner was well qualified to deceive the

unsuspecting. "Let us have all things common," said he; "and he that would be greatest among you will prove his greatness by rendering the greatest service to all, and if any of the higher powers compel thee to go a mile, let him that is compelled go ten miles." This caused him to be more attacked in his policy than in his doctrine. The great question with us Jews was, here are the Romans upon us; how can we get rid of them? Jesus' idea was to let the Romans alone; it matters not who rules and governs the nations; if they abuse you, love them in return, and they can't be your enemies long; no man can continue to abuse another, who returns injuries with love. Keep from them; pray in secret for the return of the kingdom of heaven and God's grace, and this will soon make all things right. "Pay your taxes," he would say to them; "it is only Cæsar's money you pay, which is unlawful for you to have—unlawful on account of its idolatrous effigies. Again, he would say to his hearers, "You can't conquer the Romans; better convert them, and they are your enemies no longer. They already have your temple in possession; their yoke is getting heavier every day, and *the more* you fight against them the more

they will abuse you; therefore, your only chance is to love them, and try to make your yoke easy, and your burden light by having them your friends." Indeed, the conduct of Jesus was so strange and incompatible with the interest of the Jews as a nation, it seemed to me that he was a subject employed by the Romans to keep the Jews submissive and obedient to all their tyranny and abuse.

This policy was most powerfully attacked by the officiating priests, by the Shamma-ites and zealots, and in fact, the whole Jewish nation was becoming aroused to a war-heat. The reprimands of Jesus were so severe against the rich and highly educated that they had turned against him, and brought all the power they had, both of their wealth and talent, so that I saw that a bloody insurrection was brewing fast. The public mind of the Jews was becoming more and more divided and corrupt; the doctrine of heresy was being diffused all over the land; the temple was forsaken, the holy sacrament neglected, the people were divided into sects, and these breaches were like the rent in a garment—tearing wider apart continually. As it seemed to me, the whole of the Jewish theocracy was about to be blown away as

a bubble on a breaker. As the Jews became more and more divided and confused, this increased the tyranny of the Romans. All they wanted was an excuse to slaughter, massacre the Jews, and confiscate their property. At this time both the doctrine and religion of the Jews were spreading rapidly all over Rome, which gave them great alarm. Sejanus undertook to have an ordinance passed in the Senate, abolishing the Jewish religion from Rome, and when he found it would produce an insurrection, they banished all the Jews from Rome, and back they came to Judea with all their idolatry and heresy, with many other principles of corruption from the Romans, which fitted them to join any party for profit. Up to this time the Roman kings had showed great kindness to the Jews. There never was a better man than Hyrcanus. The Jews enjoyed great peace during his administration. But Augustus has turned against us; Pilate has removed the army from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. I say, no nation with any self-respect, or one that had any energy left, would nor could stand it without a struggle.

Now the preaching of John Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth had brought all these

things upon us. When Herod Antipas captured John, it gave a quiet to things in Galilee, so that they had peace until Jesus started it up afresh. I had issued orders to Jesus to desist from preaching, unless he taught as the Jews taught. He sent me the impertinent word that his doctrine was not of this world, but had reference to the world to come; when he was all the time doing all he could to destroy the peace and harmony of this world. Now, according to our law in the *Saphra*, by Jose, B. Talmud, it devolves on me to see that the people have sound doctrine taught them. Hence it is my duty to examine all the *Midrashim* or sermons, of all the preaching priests, and if any taught the people wrong, to cause him to desist; or, if his conduct was not in correspondence with his profession, to cause him to desist; or if any disregard the holy laws of ablution, or in any way defiled himself, or if he should be guilty of any misconduct in any way, either in manner of life or doctrine, to adjudge such an one, and sentence the value of his crime upon him. This I did upon Jesus of Nazareth, to save the Church from heresy, and to save the cause of the Jewish commonwealth from final ruin. But understand that I did not

act rashly nor illegally, as I am accused. I only passed sentence under the protest and order of the whole court belonging to the high priest, containing twelve members, or elders, and priests. Thus you will see it was not an act of my voluntary power, but was legal, as was my place to do according to law. After I examined Jesus on the various charges, he said in the presence of all the court that each and all of them were true. I then reasoned with him, and asked him if the court of the high priest would forgive him of these charges would he desist from these things in all time to come. He answered most emphatically and positively he would not. Under these circumstances, I was compelled, according to our law, to sentence him to die; for if he continued to promulgate his pernicious heresies, the Jews, as a nation, must die with their religion. And, as you find in the *Toseppta*, that the nation has always the right of self-preservation, and as we had conceded the right to the Romans of executing our criminal laws, it became my painful duty to send him to Pontius Pilate, with the following charges:

"Caiaphas, high priest of the Most High God, to Pontius Pilate, governor of the Ro-

man province: Jesus of Nazareth is thus charged by the high court of the Jews:

"First, with teaching the doctrines that there are more gods than one, which is contrary to the teaching of the Jewish law, and he most positively refuses to desist in the presence of this court.

"Second, he teaches that he is a God, all of which is contrary to the Jewish law, and he is visible and comprehensible; and after being required to desist by the court, most positively affirms that he is the Son of God.

"Third, he teaches and affirms that the *Bath kole* (Holy Spirit) can't come until he goes away, which is contrary to the teaching of the Jews; because it was he that brooded over the waters, and has been the spiritual light of the world ever since; from all of which he refuses to desist.

"He teaches baptism as the seal of God, instead of circumcision, which was established by the decrees of God with Abraham as a seal of the Jews; and, when adjured to desist by the order of this court, affirmed he would not.

"He teaches asceticism as the means of salvation, contrary to the Jewish custom, and

affirmed in the presence of this court he would not desist.

"He teaches the Levitical ablution as of no service, while we hold that the outward washing is the sign of inward purity; and when adjured to desist, he emphatically refused.

"He has abrogated the ordinance given by God to Moses of the pascal supper, wherein we should roast a lamb and eat it with unleaven bread; but Jesus has introduced a different thing—altogether different—without any authority. He has inaugurated common bread and wine, which is not only forbidden, but is well qualified to excite men's passions and make them forget God rather than to remember and trust him; this feast having been introduced that we should remember to trust him in the hours of trouble. He has established this in the place of it; and the wine is well qualified to make us forget him. When asked why he did this, all he would say, was: 'Hitherto I work, and my Father works.'

"He has abrogated the priesthood, and set the temple at naught, which is the very life's blood of the Jewish faith.

"Were it not that God our Father has

given us these holy ordinances we would not be so tenacious for them. But when we know they are the pillars upon which the Jewish theocracy is built, and that we can't live without them; and when Jesus of Nazareth has been adjured time and again to stop teaching these ways of death, he has so often declared he would not; therefore, devolves on me as the proper and the only officer to pronounce sentence upon him."

These charges were written by my scribe, and sent with the officers to Pilate for his consent. Of course I did not expect him to execute him as he did, but it seemed that the mob was so great that Pilate never received them. Of course I expected Pilate to send Jesus back to me, so I could send him to you for your approval; and if so, then I would proceed to try him with Urim and Thummin, with the regular *lacktees* on guard, as our law requires; but it seemed that Pilate thirsted for his blood. Like all guilty tyrants, he was afraid of his own shadow, and wished to destroy everything that stood in his way of power.

With these reasons for my actions, I submit the case which I am sure will be considered favorably by my masters of Israel.

CONSTANTINOPLE, OCT. 16, A. D. 1883.

Sanhedrin, 89, *By Siphri II.* 7:

TO YOU, MASTERS OF ISRAEL:—As I have made a former defense to you, and you have approved the same, I feel in duty bound to communicate to you some facts that have come to my knowledge since the former communication. A few days after the execution of Jesus of Nazareth the report of his resurrection from the dead became so prominent I found it was necessary to investigate it, because the excitement was raging more heavy than before, and my own life as well as that of Pilate was in danger, and it seemed worse than if he had not been apprehended at all. I sent for Malkus, captain of the royal city guard, who informed me he knew nothing personally as he had placed Isham in command of the guard, but from what he could learn of the soldiers the scene was perfectly overwhelming, and it was so generally believed that it was no use to deny it. He thought my only chance was to suppress it among the soldiers, and have John and *Peter* banished to Crete, or have them lock-

ed up in prison, and if they would not be quiet to treat them as I had treated Jesus. He said all the soldiers he had conversed with were convinced that he was either resurrected by supernatural power, or he was not dead, or that he was no human being; for the light, and the angels, and the dead that came out of their graves, all went to prove that it was something that had never occurred on earth before. He said that John and Peter were spreading it all over the country and if it should be so that Jesus should appear at the head of a host, and declare for the king of the Jews, he believed all the Jewish soldiers would fight for him. I sent for the lieutenant, who gave a lengthy detail of the occurrence there that morning, all of which I suppose you have heard, and will investigate the subject by a committee. From this I am convinced that there was something above the laws of nature transacted there that morning that can't be accounted for upon natural principles, and I find it is of no use to try to get any of the soldiers to deny it, for they are so excited over it that there is no doing anything with them. I am now sorry that I had the soldiers placed at the

tomb, for the very thing that they were to prevent they have established.

After investigating the soldiers and officers to my satisfaction, my mind being so disturbed that I could neither eat nor sleep, I sent for John and Peter. They came, and brought Mary and Joanna. These are the women that went to embalm his body the morning of the resurrection, as it is called. They are very interesting, as they relate the circumstances Mary says when they went it was just getting light. They met the soldiers returning from the sepulcher, and they thought nothing strange until they came to the tomb and found that Jesus was gone. The stone that covered the sepulcher was rolled to one side, and there were two men dressed in flowing white, sitting, one at each end of the sepulcher. She asked them where was her Lord; they said, He is risen from the dead; did he not tell you he would rise the third day and show himself to the people, to prove that he was the Lord of life? "Go tell his disciples," said they. Joanna said she saw but one man; but this discrepancy may have been on account of their excitement, because they both say they were much alarmed. They both say *as they returned they met the Master, who*

told them he was the resurrection and the life; all that will accept shall be resurrected from the second death. "We fell at his feet, all bathed in tears, and when we rose up he was gone." Both the women wept for joy while relating these circumstances, and John shouted aloud, which made me tremble in every limb, for I could not help thinking that something that belonged to the exclusive work of God had occurred, but what it all could mean was a great mystery to me. It might be, I said, that God had sent this message by the mouth of this stranger; it might be that he was the seed of the woman, and we his people had executed him. I asked John and Peter if they could give me any further evidence in regard to this man; that I wished to be informed of his private history. Peter said the first he knew of him he passed by where he was, and bade him to follow him, and he felt an internal drawing after him, but at first it was more through curiosity than anything in the man; that he soon became acquainted with Mary, who told him that this was her son, and told him the strange circumstance respecting his birth, and she was convinced that he was to be king of the Jews, and related to him many strange

things concerning his life, which made him feel more interested in him than he should have been otherwise. He said that Jesus was a man so pleasant in his character, and so like a little child in innocency, that no one could help liking him after they got acquainted with him; that though he seemed to be stern and cold, he was not so in reality; that he was exceedingly kind, especially to the poor; that he would make any sacrifice for the sick and the needy, and would spare no pains to impart knowledge to any one that would call on him, and that his knowledge was so profound and deep that he had seen him interrogated by the most profound doctors of the law, and he always gave the most perfect satisfaction, and that the *sepher* or Scribes, and the Hallelites, and Shammaites were afraid to open their mouths in his presence. They had attacked him so often, and been repelled as often, that they would shun him as they would a wolf; but when he had repelled them he did not enjoy the triumph as they did over others, over whom they had got the ascendancy. As to his life, he seemed to be not a man of pleasure, nor of sorrow. He mingled with society to benefit *them*, and yet took no part at all in what

was going on. "I had heard many tell of what occurred when he was baptized, and from what his mother told me I was watching for a display of his divine power, if he had any, for I knew he never could be king of the Jews unless he did have help from on high; and when we were attending a marriage feast the wine had given out, and his mother told him of it, and he said to some men to fill up some water pots that were sitting near, and they put nothing in but water, for I watched them, but when they drew it out it was wine, for it was tested by all at the feast, and when the master found it out he called for Jesus to honor him, but he was gone. It seemed that he did not want to be popular, and this spirit displeased us, for we knew if he was to be king of the Jews he must become popular with the Jews. This spirit of his disgusted his mother, for she was doing all she could to bring him into notice, and to make him popular among the people, and people could not help liking him when they would see him. And another feeling was peculiar: in his presence every one felt safe. There seemed to be almighty power pervading the air wherever he went so that *each felt entirely secure, and that no harm*

could befall them if Jesus were present . I have some experience: As we were in our fishing boat I saw Jesus coming toward us, walking on the water. I knew if he could make the waves support him, he could me also. I asked him if I might come to him; he said for me to come, but when I saw the waves gathering around me I began to sink, and asked him to help me. He lifted me up, and told me to have faith in God. On another occasion we were sailing on the sea, and there was a great storm. It blew at a fearful rate, and all on board thought they would be lost, and we went and awakened the Master, and when he saw the raging of the storm he stretched out his hand and said, 'Peace, be still!' and the wind ceased to blow, the thunder ceased, the lightnings withdrew, and the billowing ocean seemed as quiet as a babe in its mother's arms—all done in one moment of time. This I saw, and with my own eyes, and from this time I was convinced that he was not a common man. Neither did he work by enchantment as the Egyptian thaumaturgists did, for all of the many feats they could play, they dared not to attack the laws of nature. In vain might they order *the thunder* to hush, or the winds to cease,

or the lightnings to cease their flashing.

Again I saw this man while we were passing from Jerico. There was a blind man, who cried out to him for mercy, and Jesus said to me, 'Go, bring him near,' and when I brought him near Jesus asked him what he wanted. He said he wanted to see him. Jesus said, 'Receive thy sight,' when he was not near enough for Jesus to lay his hands upon him or use any art. Thus were all his miracles performed. He did not act as the Egyptian necromancers. They use vessels, such as cups, bags and jugs, and many other things to deceive. Jesus uses nothing but his plain speech in such a way that all can understand him, and it seems as if the laws of nature were his main instrument of action, and that nature is as obedient to him as a slave is to his master. I saw on another occasion where a young man was dead, and Jesus loved his sisters. One of them went with Jesus to the tomb. He commanded it to be uncovered. The sister said, 'Master, by this time he is offensive; he has been dead four days.' Jesus said, 'Only have faith,' and he called the young man by name, and he came forth out of the tomb, and is living

to-day, and proposed that I should see him for myself."

Thus argues Peter and John. If Jesus had such power over nature and nature's laws, and power over death in others, he would have power over death, so he could lay down his life and take it again, as he said he would do. As he proposes to bring hundreds of witnesses to prove all he says, and much more—witnesses whose veracity can't be doubted—and as I had heard many of these things before from different men, both friends and foes, (and although these things are related by his friends—that is, the friends of Jesus—yet these men talk like men of truth, and their testimony corroborates with other evidence that I have from other sources, that convinces me that this is something that should not be rashly dealt with), and seeing the humble trust and confidence of these men and women, besides, as John says, thousands of others equally strong in their belief, it throws me into great agitation. I feel some dreadful foreboding—a weight upon my heart. I can't feel as a criminal from the fact that I was acting up to my best judgment with the evidence before me. I feel *that I was acting in defense of my God and*

country, which I love better than life, and if I was mistaken, I was honest in my mistake. And as we teach that honesty of purpose gives character to the action, and on this basis I try to clear my self of any charge, yet there is a conscious fear about my heart, so that I can have no rest day or night. I felt sure that if I should meet him I should fall dead at his feet; and it seemed to me if I went out I should be sure to meet him. In this state of conscious dread I remained investigating the Scriptures to know more about the prophecies concerning this man, but found nothing to satisfy my mind. I locked my door and gave the guard orders to let no one in without first giving me notice. While thus engaged, with no one in the room but my wife and Annas, her father, when I lifted up my eyes, behold Jesus of Nazareth stood before me. My breath stopped, my blood ran cold, and I was in the act of falling, when he spoke and said, "Be not afraid, it is I. You condemned me that you might go free. This is the work of my Father. Your only wrong is, you have a wicked heart; this you must repent of. This last Lamb you have slain is the one that was appointed before the foundation; this sacri-

fice is made for all men. Your other lambs were for those who offered them; this is for all, this is the last; it is for you if you will accept it. I died that you and all mankind might be saved." At this he looked at me with such melting tenderness that it seemed to me I was nothing but tears, and my strength was all gone. I fell on my face at his feet as one that was dead. When Annas lifted me up Jesus was gone, and the door still locked. No one could tell when or where he went.

So, noble masters, I do not feel that I can officiate as priest any more. If this strange personage is from God, and should be the Savior we have looked for so long, and I have been the means of crucifying him, I have no further offerings to make for sin; but I will wait and see how these things will develop. And if he proves to be the ruler that we are looking for, they will soon develop into something more grand in the future. His glory will increase; his strength will spread wider and wider, until the whole earth shall be full of his glory, and all the kingdoms of the world shall be his dominion. Such are the teachings of the prophets on this subject. Therefore you will appoint Jonathan or some *one, to fill the holy place.*

VOLUME IV.

PILATE'S REPORT TO TIBERIAS CAESAR.

Giving an account of the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazerath. This is from the Vatican.

To Tiberias Caesar, Emperor of Rome. Noble Sovereign—Greeting:

The events of the last few days in my province, have been of such a character that I will give the details in full as they have occurred; as I should not be surprised if, in the course of time, they may change the destiny of our nation, for it seems of late that all the gods have ceased to be propitious. I am almost ready to say, Cursed be the day that I succeeded Vallerius Flaceus in the government of Judea; for since then my life has been one of continual uneasiness and distress. On my arrival at Jerusalem, I took possession of the pretorium, and ordered a splendid feast to be prepared, to which I invited the tetrarch of Galilee, with the high priest and his officers. At the appointed hour no guests appeared. This I considered an insult offered to my dignity, and to the whole government

to which I belong. A few days after the high priest deigned to pay me a visit. His deportment was grave and deceitful. He pretended that his religion forbade him and his attendants to sit down at the table of the Romans, and eat and offer libations with them, but this was only a sanctimonious seeming, for his very countenance betrayed his hypocrisy. But I thought it expedient to accept his excuse, but from that moment I was convinced that the conquered had declared themselves the enemy of the conquerors; and I would warn the Romans to beware of the high priest of this country. They would betray their own mother to gain an office and procure a luxurious living. It seemed to me, of conquered cities, Jerusalem was the most difficult to govern. So turbulent were the people that I lived in momentary dread of an insurrection. I had not soldiers sufficient to suppress it. I only had one centurion and a hundred men at my command. I requested a reinforcement from the prefect of Syria, who informed me that he had scarcely troops sufficient to defend his own province. An insatiate thirst for conquest to extend our empire beyond the means *of defending it*, I fear, will be the cause of

final overthrow of our whole government. I lived in obscurity from the masses, for I did not know what those priests might influence the rabble to do; yet I endeavored to ascertain as much as I could the mind and standing of the people.

Among the various rumors that came to my ears, there was one that attracted my attention in particular. A young man, it was said, had appeared in Galilee, preaching with a noble unction, a new law in the name of the God that had sent him. At first I was apprehensive that his design was to stir up the people against the Romans; but my fears were soon dispelled. Jesus of Nazareth spake rather as a friend of the Romans than the Jews. One day in passing by the place of Siloe, where there was a great concourse of people, I observed in the midst of the group a young man who was leaning against a tree calmly addressing the multitude. I was told it was Jesus. This I could easily have suspected, so great was the difference between him and those who were listening to him. His golden colored hair and beard gave to his appearance a celestial aspect. He appeared to be about thirty years of age. Never have I seen a sweeter or more serene coun-

tenance. What a contrast between him and his hearers, with their black beards and tawny complexions. Unwilling to interrupt him by my presence, I continued my walk, but signified to my secretary to join the group and listen. My secretary's name was Manlius. He was the grandson of the chief of the conspirators who encamped in Etruria waiting for Cataline. Manlius was an ancient inhabitant of Judea, and well acquainted with the Hebrew language. He was devoted to me, and worthy of my confidence.

On entering the pretorium I found Manlius, who related to me the words Jesus had pronounced, at Siloe. Never have I read in the works of the philosophers anything that can compare to the maxims of Jesus. One of the rebellious Jews, so numerous in Jerusalem, having asked them if it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, Jesus replied: "Render unto Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar, and unto God the things that are his."

It was on account of the wisdom of his sayings that I granted so much liberty to the Nazarene; for it was in my power to have had him arrested, and exiled to Pontus; but *this* would have been contrary to the justice

which has always characterized the Roman government in all her dealings with men; this man was neither seditious nor rebellious; I extended to him my protection, unknown perhaps to himself. He was at liberty to act, to speak, to assemble, and address the people, to choose disciples, unrestrained by any pretorian mandate. Should it ever happen (may the gods ever avert the omen!), should it ever happen, I say, that the religion of our forefathers should be supplemented by the religion of Jesus, it will be to this noble toleration that Rome shall owe her premature obsequies, while I, miserable wretch, shall have been the instrument of what the Jews call Providence, and we call destiny.

This unlimited freedom granted to Jesus provoked the Jews, not the poor, but the rich and powerful. It is true, Jesus was severe on the latter, and this was a political reason, in my opinion, for not restraining the liberty of the Nazarene,—“Scribes and Pharisees,” he would say to them, “you are a race of vipers; you resemble painted sepulchers; you appear well unto men, but you have death within you.” At other times he would sneer at the alms of the rich and proud, telling them that the mite of the poor was more

precious in the sight of God. New complaints were daily made at the pretorium against the insolence of Jesus. I was even informed that some misfortune would befall him; that it would not be the first time that Jerusalem had stoned those that called themselves prophets; and if the pretorium refused justice, an appeal would be made to Cæsar. However, my conduct was approved by the Senate, and I was promised a reinforcement after the termination of the Parthean war. Being too weak to suppress a sedition, I resolved upon adopting a measure that promised to establish the tranquility of the city, without subjecting the pretorium to humiliating concession. I wrote to Jesus, requesting an interview with him at the pretorium. He came. You know that in my veins flows the Spanish mixed with Roman blood—as incapable of fear as it is of puerile emotion. When the Nazarene made his appearance, I was walking in my Basilic, and my feet seemed fastened with an iron hand to the marble pavements, and I trembled in every limb as a guilty culprit, though he was calm; the Nazarene was as calm as innocence itself. When he came up to me he stopped, and by a *signal sign* he seemed to say to me, “I am

here;” though he spoke not a word. For some time I contemplated with admiration and awe this extraordinary type of man—a type of man unknown to our numerous painters who have given form and figure to all the gods and the heroes. There is nothing about him that was repelling in its character, yet I felt awed and tremulous to approach him.

“Jesus,” said I unto him at last—and my tongue faltered—“Jesus of Nazareth, I have granted you for the last three years ample freedom of speech; nor do I regret it. Your words are those of a sage. I know not whether you have read Socrates or Plato, but this I know, there is in your discourses a majestic simplicity, that elevates you far above these philosophers. The Emperor is informed of it, and I, his humble representative in this country, am glad of having allowed you that liberty of which you are so worthy. However, I must not conceal from you that your discourses have raised up against you powerful and inveterate enemies. Neither is this surprising. Socrates had his enemies, and he fell a victim to their hatred. Yours are doubly incensed against you, on account of your discourses being so severe

against their conduct; against me, on account of the liberty I have afforded you. They even accuse me of being indirectly leagued with you, for the purpose of depriving the Hebrews of the little civil power which Rome has left them. My request—I do not say my order—is, that you be more circumspect and moderate in your discourses in the future, and more tender toward them, lest you arouse the pride of your enemies, and they raise against you the stupid populace, and compel me to employ the instruments of law.”

The Nazarene calmly replied: “Prince of the earth, your words proceed not from true wisdom. Say to the torrent to stop in the midst of the mountain gorge; it will uproot the trees of the valley. The torrent will answer you that it obeys the laws of nature and the Creator. God alone knows whither flow the waters of the torrent. Verily I say unto you, before the rose of Sharon blossoms the blood of the just shall be split.”

“Your blood shall not be spilt,” said I with deep emotion; “you are more precious in my estimation on account of your wisdom than all the turbulent and proud Pharisees, who abuse the freedom granted them by the Romans. They conspire against Cæsar, and con-

vert his bounty into fear, impressing the unlearned that Cæsar is a tyrant and seeks their ruin. Insolent wretches, they are not aware that the wolf of the Tiber sometimes clothes himself with the skin of the sheep to accomplish his wicked ends. I will protect you against them. My pretorium shall be an asylum, sacred both day and night."

Jesus carelessly shook his head and said with a grave and divine smile: "When the day shall have come, there will be no asylums for the son of man, neither in the earth nor under the earth. The asylum of the just is there," pointing to the heavens. "That which is written in the books of the prophets must be accomplished."

"Young man," answered I mildly, "you oblige me to convert my request into an order. The safety of the province, which has been confined to my care, requires it. You must observe more moderation in your discourses. Do not infringe my order. You know the consequences. May happiness attend you; farewell."

"Prince of the earth, replied Jesus, "I come not to bring war into the world, but peace, love and charity. I was born the same day on which Augustus Cæsar gave peace to the

Roman world. Persecutions proceed not from me. I expect it from others, and will meet it in obedience to the will of my Father who has shown me the way. Restrain, therefore, your worldly prudence. It is not in your power to arrest the victim at the foot of the tabernacle of expiation."

So saying, he disappeared like a bright shadow behind the curtains of the Basilic to my great relief, for I felt a heavy burden on me, from which I could not extricate myself while in his presence.

To Herod, who then reigned in Galilee, the enemies of Jesus addressed themselves, to wreak their vengeance on the Nazarene. Had Herod consulted his own inclinations, he would have ordered Jesus immediately to be put to death; but though proud of his royal dignity, yet he was afraid of committing an act that might diminish his influence with the Senate, or, like me, was afraid of Jesus himself. But it would never do for a Roman officer to be scared by a Jew. Previous to this Herod called on me at the pretorium, and, on rising to take leave, after some insignificant conversation, asked me what was my opinion concerning the Nazarene. I replied that Jesus appeared to me to be one of those

great philosophers that great nations sometimes produced; that his doctrines are by no means sacrilegious, and that the intentions of Rome were to leave him to that freedom of speech which was justified by his actions. Herod smiled maliciously, and, saluting me with an ironical respect, departed.

The great feast of the Jews was approaching, and the intention was to avail themselves of the popular exultation which always manifests itself at the solemnities of a passover. The city was overflowing with a tumultuous populace, clamoring for the death of the Nazarene. My emissaries informed me that the treasurer of the temple had been employed in bribing the people. The danger was pressing. A Roman Centurion had been insulted. I wrote to the Prefect of Syria for a hundred foot soldiers, and as many calvary. He declined. I saw myself alone with a handful of veterans in the midst of a rebellious city, too weak to suppress a disorder, and having no other choice left but to tolerate it. They had seized upon Jesus, and the seditious rabble, although they had nothing to fear from the pretorium, believing, as their leaders had told them, that I winked at their

sedition—continued vociferating: “Crucify him! Crucify him!

Three powerful parties had combined together at that time against Jesus: First, the Herodians and the Sadducees, whose seditious conduct seemed to have proceeded from double motives: they hated the Nazarene, and were impatient of the Roman yoke. They could never forgive me for having entered the holy city with banners that bore the image of the Roman Emperor; and although in this instance I had committed a fatal error, yet the sacrilege did not appear less heinous in their eyes. Another grievance also rankled in their bosoms. I had proposed to employ a part of the treasure of the Temple in erecting edifices for public utility. My proposal was scorned. The Pharisees were the avowed enemies of Jesus. They cared not for the government. They bore with bitterness the severe reprimands which the Nazarene for three years had been continually throwing out against them wherever he went. Too weak and pusillanimous to act by themselves, they had embraced the quarrels of the Herodians and the Sadducees. Besides these three parties, I had to contend against the reckless and profligate populace, always ready to join

a sedition, and to profit by the disorder and confusion that resulted therefrom.

Jesus was dragged before the High Priest, and condemned to death. It was then that the High Priest, Caiaphas, performed a divisory act of submission. He sent his prisoner to me to pronounce his condemnation and secure his execution. I answered him that, as Jesus was a Gallilean, the affair came in Herod's jurisdiction, and ordered him to be sent thither. The wily Tetrarch professed humanity, and protesting his preference to the Lieutenant of Cæsar, he committed the fate of the man to my hands. Soon my palace assumed the aspect of a besieged citadel. Every moment increased the number of the seditionists. Jerusalem was inundated with crowds from the mountains of Nazareth. All Judea appeared to be pouring into the devoted city. I had taken a wife from among the Gauls, who pretended to see into futurity. Weeping and throwing herself at my feet, "Beware," said she to me, "beware, and touch not that man; for he is holy. Last night I saw him in a vision. He was walking on the waters; he was flying on the wings of the wind. He spoke to the tempest, and to the fishes of the lake; all were obedient to him.

Behold, the torrent in Mount Kedron flows with blood, the statues of Cæsar are filled with gemonide; the columns of the interior have given away, and the sun is veiled in mourning like a vestal in the tomb. Ah! Pilate, evil awaits thee. If thou wilt not listen to the vows of thy wife, dread the curse of a Roman Senate; dread the frowns of Cæsar."

By this time the marble stairs groaned under the weight of the multitude. The Nazarene was brought back to me. I proceeded to the halls of justice, followed by my guard, and asked the people in a severe tone what they demanded.

"The death of the Nazarene," was their reply.

"For what crime?"

"He has blasphemed; he has prophesied the ruin of the Temple; he calls himself the Son of God, the Messiah, the King of the Jews."

"Roman justice," said I, "punishes not such offenses with death."

"Crucify him! Crucify him!" belched forth the relentless rabble. The vociferations of the infuriated mob shook the palace to its foundations.

There was but one who appeared to be calm in the midst of the vast multitude; it was the Nazarene. After many fruitless attempts to protect him from the fury of his merciless persecutors, I adopted a measure which at the moment appeared to me to be the only one that could save his life. I proposed, as it was their custom to deliver a prisoner on such occasions, to release Jesus and let him go free, that he might be the scape-goat, as they called it; but they said Jesus must be crucified. I then appealed to them as to the inconsistency of their course as being incompatible with their laws, showing that no criminal judge could pass sentence on a criminal unless he had fasted one whole day; and that sentence must have the consent of the Sanhedrin, and the signature of the president of that court; that no criminal could be executed on the same day his sentence was fixed, and the next day, on the day of his execution, the Sanhedrin was required to review the whole proceeding; also, according to their law, a man stationed at the door of the court with a flag, and another a piece off on horseback to cry the name of the criminal and his crime, and the name of his witnesses, and to know if any one can testify anything

in his favor; and the prisoner on his way to execution had the right to turn back three times, and to plead any new thing in his favor. I urged all these pleas, hoping they might awe them into submission; but they still cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

I then ordered him to be scourged, hoping this might satisfy them; but it only increased their fury. I then called for a basin, and washed my hands in the presence of the clamorous multitude, thus testifying that in my judgment Jesus of Nazareth had done nothing worthy of death; but in vain. It was his life these wretches thirsted for.

Often in our civil commotions have I witnessed the furious animosity of the multitude, but nothing could be compared to what I witnessed on this occasion. It might have been truly said that on this occasion all the phantoms of the infernal regions had assembled at Jerusalem. The crowd appeared not to walk, but to be borne off and whirled as a vortex, rolling along in living waves from the portals of the pretorium even unto Mount Zion, with howling screams, shrieks and vociferations such as were never heard in the seditions of the panonia or in the tumult of the forum.

By degrees the day darkened like a winter's twilight, such as had been at the death of the great Julius Cæsar. It was likewise the Ides of March. I, the continued governor of a rebellious province, was leaning against a column of my Basilic, contemplating athwart the dreary gloom these fiends of Tartarus dragging to execution the innocent Nazarene. All around me was deserted. Jerusalem had vomited forth her indwellers through the funeral gate that leads to Gemonica. An air of desolation and sadness enveloped me. My guards had joined the cavalry, and the centurion, to display a shadow of power, was endeavoring to keep order. I was left alone, and my breaking heart admonished me that what was passing at that moment appertained rather to the history of the gods than that of men. A loud clamor was heard proceeding from Golgotha, which, borne on the winds, seemed to announce an agony such as was never heard by mortal ears. Dark clouds lowered over the pinnacle of the Temple and setting over the city covered it as with a veil. So dreadful were the signs that men saw both in the heavens and on the earth, that Dionysius the Areopagite is reported to have exclaimed, "Either the

author of nature is suffering, or the universe is falling apart."

Whilst these appalling scenes of nature were transpiring, there was a dreadful earthquake in lower Egypt, which filled everybody with fear, and scared the superstitious Jews almost to death. It is said Balthasar, an aged and learned Jew of Antioch, was found dead after the excitement was over. Whether he died from alarm or grief is not known. He was a strong friend of the Nazarene.

Towards the first hour of the night I threw my mantle around me, and went down into the city towards the gates of Golgotha. The sacrifice was consummated. The crowd was returning home, still agitated, it is true, but gloomy, taciturn and desperate. What they had witnessed had stricken them with terror and remorse. I also saw my little Roman cohort pass by mournfully, the standard bearer having veiled his eagle in token of grief; and I overheard some of the Jewish soldiers murmuring strange words which I did not understand. Others were recounting prodigies almost similar to those which had so often smitten the Romans by the will of the gods. Some times groups of *men and women* would halt, then, looking

back toward Mount Calvary, would remain motionless in expectation of witnessing some new prodigy.

I returned to the pretorium sad and pensive. On ascending the stairs, the steps of which were stained with the blood of the Nazarene, I perceived an old man in a suppliant posture, and behind him several Romans in tears. He threw himself at my feet and wept most bitterly. It is painful to see an old man weep, and my heart already overcharged with grief, we, though strangers, mutually wept together. And in truth it seemed that the tears lay very shallow that day with very many whom I perceived out of the vast concourse of people. I never saw such a complete division of feeling, both on the extreme. Those that betrayed and sold him, those that testified against him, those that said, "Crucify him, we will have his blood," all slunk off like cowardly curs, and washed their teeth with vinegar. As I am told that Jesus taught a resurrection and a separation after death, if such should be the fact I am sure it commenced in this vast crowd.

"Father," said I to him, after gaining con-

trol of my feelings, "who are you, and what is your request?"

"I am Joseph of Arimathea, "replied he, "and am come to beg of you upon my knees the permission to bury Jesus of Nazareth."

"Your prayer is granted," said I to him; and at the same time ordered Manlius to take some soldiers with him to superintend the interment lest it should be profaned.

A few days after the sepulcher was found empty. His disciples published all over the country that Jesus had risen from the dead, as he had foretold. This last report created more excitement than the first. As to its truth I cannot say for certain, but I have made some investigation in the matter; so you can examine for yourself, and see if I am in fault, as Herod represents me.

Joseph buried Jesus in his own tomb. Whether he contemplated his resurrection or calculated to cut him another I cannot tell. The next day after he was buried one of the priests came to the pretorium and said they were apprehensive that his disciples intended to steal the body of Jesus and hide it, and then make it appear that he had risen from the dead, as he had foretold, and of which *they were* perfectly convinced. I sent him

to the captain of the royal guard (Malcus) to tell him to take the Jewish soldiers, place as many around the sepulcher as were needed; then if anything should happen they would blame themselves, and not the Romans.

When the great excitement arose about the sepulcher being found empty, I felt a deeper solicitude than ever. I sent for Malcus, who told me he had placed his lieutenant, Ben Isham, with one hundred soldiers around the sepulcher. He told me that Isham and the soldiers were very much alarmed at what had occurred there that morning. I sent for this man Isham, who related to me as near as I can remember, the following circumstances: He said at about the beginning of the fourth watch, they saw a soft and beautiful light over the sepulcher. He at first thought that the women had come to embalm the body of Jesus, as was the custom, but he could not see how they had got through the guards. Whilst these reflections were passing through his mind, behold, the whole place was lighted up, and there seemed to be crowds of the dead in their grave clothes. All seemed to be shouting and filled with ecstasy, while all around and above was the most beautiful music he had ever heard;

and the whole air seemed to be full of voices praising God. At this time there seemed to be a reeling and swimming of the earth, so that he turned so sick and faint that he could not stand on his feet. He said the earth seemed to swim from under him, and his senses left him, so that he knew not what did occur. I asked him in what condition he was when he came to himself. He said he was lying on the ground with his face down. I asked him if he could not have been mistaken as to the light. Was it not day that was coming in the east? He said at first he thought that, but at a stone's cast it was exceedingly dark; and then he remembered it was too early for day. I asked him if his dizziness might not have come from being awakened up and getting up too suddenly, as it sometimes had that effect. He said he was not, and had not been asleep all night, as the penalty was death for him to sleep on duty. He said he had let some of the soldiers sleep at a time. Some were asleep then. I asked him how long the scene lasted. He said he did not know but thought nearly one hour. He said it was hid by the light of day. I asked him if he went to the sepulcher after he had come to himself. He said

not, because he was afraid; that just as soon as relief came they all went to their quarters. I asked him if he had been interrogated by the priests. He said he had. They wanted him to say it was an earthquake, and to say they were asleep, and offered him money to tell that the disciples came and stole him; but he saw no disciples; he did not know that the body was gone until he was told so. I asked him what was the private opinion of those priests he had conversed with. He said some of them thought that Jesus was no man; that he was not a human being; that he was not the son of Mary; that he was not the same that was said to be born of the virgin in Bethlehem; that the same person had been on the earth before with Abraham and Lot, and at many times and places.

It seems to me if the Jewish theory be true, these conclusions would be correct, for, to sum up his life, it would be in accord with this man's life, as is known and testified by both friends and foes; for the elements were no more in his hands than the clay in the hands of the potter. He could convert water into wine; he could change death into life, diseases into health; he could calm the seas, still the storms, call up fish with a silver coin

4

in its mouth. Now, I say if he could do all these things—which he did, and many more, as the Jews testify; and it was doing these things that created this enmity against him; he was not charged with criminal offenses, nor was he charged with violating any law, nor of wronging any individual in person; all these facts are known to thousands, as well by his foes as by his friends; so I am almost ready to say, as did Manlius at the cross, “Truly this was the Son of God.”

Now, noble Sovereign, this is as near the facts in the case as I can arrive at them, and I have taken this pains to make the statement more full so that you may judge of my conduct upon the whole, as I hear that Antipater has said many hard things of me in this matter. With the promise of faithfulness and good wishes to my noble Sovereign.

I am your most obedient servant,

PONTIUS PILATE.

VOLUME V.

HEROD'S TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.

This is taken from the Second Commonwealth, written by a Jewish Rabbi. Herod's apologetic letter to the Roman Senate for his massacre of the infants of Bethlehem. This was taken from the Vatican.

The chief men of the Hebrews gave utterance to their indignation before Hyrcan. They told him that he was no longer the ruler, but Antipater and his sons were. They demanded that Herod be brought to trial for his defiance of the law. Besides these, there were the mother's of Herod's victims, who had come to Jerusalem, and in the temple loudly clamored for justice in behalf of their slain sons. At last Hyrcan was compelled to bring Herod to trial, although he loved him paternally, and was sincerely attached to Antipater. By order of Hyrcan, Herod was summoned to appear before the Sanhedrin. His father advised him to appear with a body-guard sufficient to protect him in any emergency; and Sextus Cæsar wrote to Hyrcan that Herod must be acquitted.

THE TRIAL AND FLIGHT OF HEROD.

In royal robes and decorations, and surrounded by a large body-guard, Herod appeared (43 B. C.) before the Sanhedrin. This novel and audacious spectacle confused the high lords of law and peace, and their courage failed them. Hyrcan presided over a fear-stricken body. One, however, was bold enough to speak, and that was SHEMAIAH. He gave utterance to his indignation that a man accused of high crime should dare to appear before his judges in royal pomp, as this man Herod had come with his body-guard to intimidate the Sanhedrin; and then he turned upon his colleagues, upbraided them for their cowardice and subserviency, and closed thus: "However, take you notice that God is great, and this very man, whom ye are about to absolve and dismiss for the sake of Hyrcan, will one day punish both you and your king himself." Now the trial was opened and the senators appeared ready to do justice to Herod. Hyrcan observing that his favorite's life was seriously jeopardized, adjourned the Sanhedrin to the next day. During the night Herod, as advised by Hyrcan, left the city and went to Damascus. The indignation of *the Sanhedrin* and the predictions of friends

were in vain. They could not move Hyrcan to any decisive action against Antipater and his sons.

HEROD INVADES THE COUNTRY.

Sextus Cæsar appointed Herod general of the Coelosyrian army, and he invaded Palestine. This placed his father and brother in Jerusalem in a precarious condition. They went out to Herod, and succeeded in persuading him to leave the country and to be satisfied with the demonstration of power and rank he had made in the face of his enemies. Herod retired with his army and remained in his office in spite of his being a fugitive from justice.

Herod Antipater's defense before the Roman Senate in regard to his conduct at Bethlehem.

ROME, ITALY. I find in the library of the Vatican, in a scroll, the following record, marked Herod Antipater's defense.

Noble Romans, in the case whereof I am accused, these Jews are of all people the most superstitious, and no more to be trusted than the Hindoos. They have taught themselves to believe there is but one God, and he dwells in a foreign world, so they can neither see

nor hear him, nor in any way approach him by their senses. They believe that he is unchangeable; that he dwells apart from them; that he is unapproachable; that he can only manifest himself through some angel or spirit or some light, or the thunder, or any strange and uncommon phenomenon. Hence, they are so superstitious that they can be made to believe anything.

In order that you may know what kind of people I have to deal with, I will give you some of their maxims: (1) when the sun shines, they say their God smiles; (2) when it is cloudy they say he knows; (3) when it thunders they say he is angry, and they hide themselves; (4) when it rains they say he weeps, and all such sayings as these. Now, my lords, you can see at once how far these people might be led, if they could be made to believe this strange God was at the head, and commanded their cause.

Now, as a foundation for all this foolishness, they have a book, and a set of men, called priests, who read and expound this book to them, and they will believe anything these priests tell them. To show how far they may be led, these priests tell them that *some thousands of years ago one Moses died,*

and went to where this strange God dwelt. He was gone forty days, and when he came back he brought this book that was written by this God for their government. Now, to prove the whole thing is a forgery, the whole book is made for the benefit of the priest. The poor have to work and toil continually and pay half what they make, and sometimes almost starve to keep up the lazy priests and furnish them and their women with plenty of fine garments and wine, and the best of all the food. The priests tell these poor Jews that this God requires them to bring the best calf, the best lamb, and the best of the flour and oil to the Temple, to offer in sacrifice; and the priests and their party get all this for themselves. I often tell them when they set up an objection against the Roman taxation, that they could keep up a thousand Cæsars for much less than they can keep up their God and priests.

These leaders are divided, and are always quarrelling and fighting among themselves, and dividing off in different sects. Miracles are as common as poor physicians. Essenes are noted for both. They prophesy, work miracles, see visions, and dream dreams, and stand in reputation as quack doctors.

They pretend to know all about angels, ghosts and spirits; they profess the art of managing ethereal citizens of trans-atmospheric regions. They live together in colonies, some of them are Cenobitic, and some are Celibate communities. They maintain that each of them are priests and high priests; therefore their daily baptisms as the priests on duty. Their garbs are the Levitical garments; their tables are their altars, and their meals their only sacrifices. With this sanctimonious misanthrophy, which is their highest virtue, they use the allegorical method of expounding the Scripture. When we think, reason and reflect, and use our faculties to obtain our ideas of duty, they shut their eyes and fold their hands, waiting to be endued with power from their God; and when they get it, it proves to be all to their own advantage and interest, to the ruin of their fellow citizens.

The Sadducees are another party, as equally absurd. They get their doctrine from Antigonus Sochæus, who was President of the Sanhedrin. They reject all tradition of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Then we find the Sepher, or Scribe. They are the writers and expounders of the law. *Pharisees*, derived from *Pharash*, to separate.


They separate from all men on account of their sanctity. But it is useless to give all these sects, with their peculiar views, each differing from the other. They are all strict monotheists, yet they differ from each other more than the polytheists do.

I have given this detailed description of the people and their various sects that the Senate may have an idea of the situation I am in. But if you could be here and see and associate with them as I do—to see them with all the sanctity of life, and then behold their treachery to each other; see how they will lie and steal the one from the other; and then to see how low and base are their priests—you would be much better qualified to judge of my actions.

As to this great excitement at Bethlehem, there were three strange fantastic looking fellows called on my guards at the gate, and asked them where was the babe born that was to be King of the Jews. My guards told me of it, and I ordered the men to be brought into court. I asked them who they were. One of them said he was from Egypt. I asked him what was their business. He said they were in search of the babe that was born to rule the Jews. I told him that I ruled the

Jews under Augustus Cæsar. But he said this babe would rule when I was gone. I told him not unless he was born under the purple. I asked how he knew of this babe. He said they had all had a dream the same night about it. I told them that the devil played with our brains when we were asleep. He drew a parchment roll from his bosom, and read in the Hebrew language: "Thou, Bethlehem, least among the kingdoms of the world, out of thee should come a man that should rule all people." I asked him who wrote that. He said the God of Heaven. I asked him where he got that parchment. He said it was the law of the covenant of the Jews. He also said a star had traveled before them all the way to Jerusalem. I told him his God was mistaken; that Bethlehem was not a kingdom, neither was it the least in the Kingdom of Judea. I told them that they were superstitious fanatics, and ordered them out of my presence.

But the excitement still grew until it became overwhelming. I found nothing could control it. I called the Hillel court, which is the most learned body of talent in Jerusalem. They read out of their laws that Jesus was *to be born of a virgin in Bethlehem*; that he



was to rule all nations, and all the kingdoms of the world were to be subject to him; and that his kingdoms should never end, but his appointees should continue this rule forever. I found this court just as sanguine as those strangers, and, in fact, it was in everybody's mouth; and I thought I could discover already a sort of dividing and mocking spirit among the lower classes in regard to the Roman authority. Now, it is my opinion that the scene that occurred at Bethlehem was nothing more than a meteor traveling through the air, or the rising vapor from the foot of the mountains out of the low marshy ground, as is often the case. And as to the noise, heard by Melker and those shepherd boys, it was only the echo of the shepherds on the other side of the mountain calling the night-watch, or scaring away the wolves from their flocks. But although this was nothing but a phenomenon of nature, and the whole thing a delusion, it did not better the condition I was in. A man will contend for a false faith stronger than he will for a true one, from the fact that the truth defends itself, but a falsehood must be defended by its adherents, first to prove it to themselves, and, second, that they *may* appear right in the estimation of

their friends. But the fact in this case is about the following: The Roman taxation was cutting off the support of the priests, and they are smarting under it. Again, the double taxing—that is the tithes to the priests, and the tax of the Romans—was bearing heavy on the common people, so that they could not stand it, and the priests saw that one of them would have to go unpaid; and as they saw the Romans were the stronger, they wrote these things in the Tosephta, and read it daily in all their synagogues and temples, that the Jewish mind might be prepared for the event, knowing that they would magnify a mote into a mountain, when it came to anything outside of the common laws of nature, and knowing, if they could get the common people to believe in the things, that there would be no end to their fighting. And from all appearances the excitement was driving the people fast that way. It had already become a by-word with the children of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, that the Jews had a new king, that neither Cæsar nor Herod would reign any more, that they would have to pay no more taxes to keep up the Roman government. All such talk and sayings were common among the poorer classes of society. So

I saw an insurrection brewing fast, and nothing but a most bloody war as the consequence. Now, under these circumstances, what was I to do? In my honest judgment it was best to pluck the undeveloped flower in its bud, lest it should be permitted to grow, and strengthen, and finally to burst, and shed its deadly poison over and destroy both nations, impoverish and ruin them forever. My enemies can see I could have no malice at the infants of Bethlehem. I had no delight in listening to the cries of innocent mothers. May all the gods forbid! No; I saw nothing but an insurrection and a bloody war were our doom, and in this the overthrow and downfall, to some extent, of our nation.

So these are the grounds of my action in all this thing. I am satisfied I did the best thing that could be done under the circumstances. As my motive was purely to do the best I could for my whole country, I hope you will so consider it, as I submit these things for your action, promising faithfulness and submission to your judgment.

HEROD ANTIPATER.

Herod Antipas' defense before the Roman Senate in regard to the execution of John Baptist.

CITY OF ROME, Sept. 26, 1883.

We found on the records of the Roman Senate, Herod Antipas' defense respecting the various accusations preferred against him by different persons. In his defense there are some very important items, as regards the Christian Church. The reader will notice that these events were recorded with no intention of establishing other facts. 1st. The history of John Baptist. 2nd. The history of Jesus Christ. 3rd. The killing of the children by his father at Bethlehem.

To Tiberius Caesar and the Senate of Rome.

My Noble Lords.—Greeting:

It is true, as my opponent asserts, that I was defeated in the battle with Aretas, king of Arabia, but I was forced into a battle when I was not prepared for the engagement, and I either had to do this or have the country over-run by this wicked people. It is true I was defeated, but it was for the want of time and a better preparation. Aretas came on me before I was notified of the fact. Notwithstanding I was defeated, his army was so crippled that he had to withdraw his *forces from the field*, and has not been able

to rally them since. So our country was saved from a devastation of the foreign foe.

I understand that the superstitious Jews say my defeat was for my wickedness in beheading John Baptist. My understanding of the God of the Jews is, that he does not chastise the innocent for the crimes of the guilty. What did my actions have to do with the poor, suffering soldiers; But if he had to punish all in order to reach me, then where is his almighty power they boast so much of? I do not know whether their God was angry at me or not. There is one thing I know, the act was done with the holy intention of bringing the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people; and if this is so, no court can gainsay it or condemn it.

The facts in the case are about the following: John Baptist had set up a new mode of religion, altogether different from the Jewish religion, teaching baptism instead of circumcision. This had been the belief and custom of the Jews in all ages past. According to their theory, God had appeared to Abraham hundreds of years before, and told him with his own lips how and what to do to be saved; and according to this the Jews had lived until it had become their nature, and all

their forefathers had lived in this way. David, Solomon, Isaac, Jacob, and all the holy prophets had gone to heaven in this way of God's own appointment. Now, the question came to them as they suggested it to me: "Has God found that he was wrong? Has his wisdom failed him? or has the unchangeable changed, and is he wavering in his purpose?" Such would be the natural conclusions of a sensible man under the circumstances. Now, John Baptist has no authority from God for what he is doing, like Abraham had. All he can say is, "He that sent me to baptize is true;" and he can't tell who he was. Then his going into the wilderness: God had ordered Solomon to build the finest temple that was ever built in the world, and made promises that whosoever came to that house with his offerings, his prayers should be heard and answered; which had been the place of their meeting for hundreds of years, for the Jews think this Temple the next place to heaven.

Now see the difference:

- 1st. John has no authorized authority.
 - 2nd. He changes God's place of worship.
 - 3rd. He changes the doctrines.
 - 4th. He changes the mode of applying.
- Now, the idea of Gamaliel was that John

wanted to be some great man; hence, he took this mode of eccentric life to establish it. And there is nothing better qualified than the course he took to make an impression upon the ignorant and unlearned—to go away out in the wilderness by himself, get a few friends from Jerusalem to go out and hear him, and come back and tell of the great wonders which they had seen in the wilderness. Then John's appearance—his long, uncombed hair and beard, his fantastic clothing, and his food; nothing but bugs and beans—such a course and such a character are well qualified to lead the illiterate astray. These troubles on the Jewish mind were very heavy, and gave such men as Hilderium, Shammai, Hillel, and others, great trouble. And no wonder, for in their judgment it was vacating the temple of religious worship; it was blocking the road to heaven, and driving the poor and unsuspecting to ruin, as well as ruining the whole nation. So it was, by their request, as so ordered, that it was better to execute one to save the many from a worse fate. And this is the true reason for the deed, and not to please the whim of a dancing girl, as you have heard. Now, my Lords, if this is not satisfactory, I would ask my accuser, Caius,

to write to any of the learned Jews, and see if my statement is not correct.

As to Agrippa's accusing me of having arms for seventy thousand soldiers, it is correct; but they were left me by my father, Herod the Great. And as they were needed to defend the province, and I did not know it was necessary to report them.

I never thought of keeping them secret. But as to my being in league with Sejonius, I appeal to the virtue of my conduct, and demand investigation.

As to what Pontius Pilate says in regard to my cowardice and disobedience in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, I will say in my own defense: I was informed by all the Jews that this was the same Jesus that my father aimed to destroy in his infancy; for I have it in my father's private writings, accounts of his life, showing that, when the report was circulated of three men, inquiring where was he that was born King of the Jews, he called together the Hillel and Shammai schools, and demanded the reading of the sacred scrolls; that it was decided he was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea, as read and interpreted that night by Hillel. So when *my father* learned that there was a birth of

a male child in Bethlehem under very strange circumstances, and he could not learn who nor where the child was, he sent and had the male children slain that were near the age. Afterwards he learned that his mother had taken him and fled into the wilderness. For this attempt to save the Roman authority in the land of Judea the world has not ceased to curse him to this day; and yet the Cæsars have done a thousand worse things, and done them a thousand times, and it was all well. Just think how many lives have been lost to save the Roman Empire; when those infants were only removed from the evil to come while in their innocence. The proper way to judge of action is to let the actor judge, or the one on whom the action terminates. If this should be done, and there is a life of happiness beyond this for innocence to dwell in, those infants as well as the Rachels would be thankful to my father for the change. Again, my Lords, Pilate is a higher officer than I; and you know in our law the lower court always has the right to appeal to the higher.

As to Pilate's saying that Jesus was a Galilean, he is mistaken. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, as the records show.

And as to his citizenship, he had none. He wandered about from place to place, having no home, but making his abode principally with the poor. He was a wild fanatic, who had taken up the doctrines of John (except his baptism), and was quite an enthusiast. He had learned sooth-saying while in Egypt to perfection. I tried to get him to show some miracle while in my court, but he was too sharp to be caught in a trap, like all those necromancers; they are afraid to show off before the intelligent. From what I can learn he had reprimanded some of the rich Jews for their meanness, and they were not out of the way; but from what I heard from him they would have been much better men if they had practiced what he preached.

So this is my defense. I submit it for your consideration, praying for clemency.

HEROD ANTIPAS.

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